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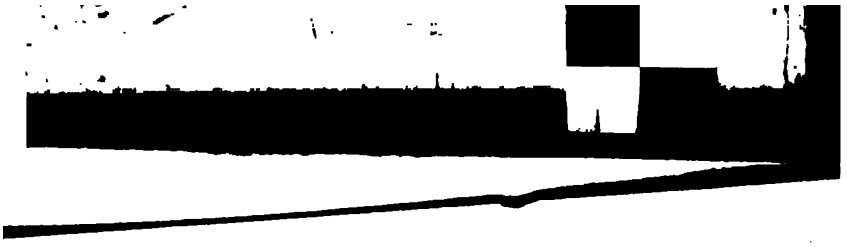
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Lilla M. Butler





EMPRESSES *of* FRANCE







JOSEPHINE IN 1805.
Gérard.





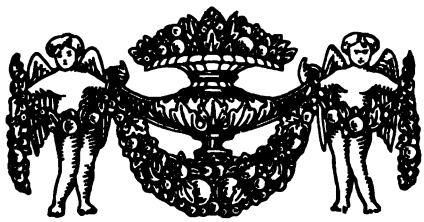
JOSEPHINE IN 1805.
Gérard.



EMPRESSES *of* FRANCE

BY H. A. GUERBER, AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF THE WAGNER OPERAS," "STORIES OF FAMOUS OPERAS," "LEGENDS OF SWITZERLAND," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



NEW YORK · DODD · MEAD
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PREFACE

IN the course of extended researches into the history of France, I first became aware of the fact that neither in French nor in English does there exist any brief yet comprehensive work giving the lives of the Queens and Empresses. The lack of such a book having proved a great annoyance to me, I felt it would perchance assist other students were I to weave my copious notes into consecutive narratives which would also interest the general public.

While the Queens of France are very numerous and often insignificant, the Empresses are three women of note, whose lives extend over more than a century. As their sayings and doings form an important part of the stirring history of their time, it has seemed best to give them a volume to themselves.

Josephine, Marie Louise, and Eugénie are names which call to mind endless pageants and touching or dramatic scenes, which historians, novelists, poets, and playwrights have already used in their works, and will doubtless use again. Even Marie Louise, characterless



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as she was, has recently aroused fresh interest in the literary world, owing to the appearance of Edmond Rostand's play, which gives, in a series of moving pictures, the aspirations and early death of her son, "L'Aiglon," and her own intrigues with the man who ultimately became her third spouse.

Two other modern plays, "More than Queen" and "Madame Sans Gêne," are also connected with the Empresses of France, whose varied lives are described in these pages. In admiring the works of poets, novelists, or playwrights, it is well also to note how cleverly they have taken advantage of the least historical facts, which, magnified or brought into greater relief, serve to enhance the dramatic force of their novels, poems, or plays.

The data for these narratives has been carefully collated from newspapers, letters, histories, poems, and memoirs of the time, thus giving as accurately as possible the views held by the Empresses' contemporaries, together with any new light modern research could supply. In depicting the lives of sovereigns who played prominent parts in notoriously licentious courts, it has not been deemed possible or advisable to gloze over certain unsavoury episodes, or to adapt the book exclusively for "babes and sucklings," or even for the wholly ignorant or innocent "maid of sixteen."

It is also not without considerable reluctance that I undertook to give an account of the sole survivor of this



Preface

unfortunate but brilliant trio, for her misfortunes have rendered her sacred to the world at large. But history is pitiless, and those who ascend a throne are necessarily exposed to the "white light which beats" upon it. Inured to all species of dissection and calumny, as well as to the most fulsome flattery, they know it is hard, if not impossible, to obtain the exact truth here below.

Long residence in Paris and familiarity with all French sources of information have supplied material which I could not else have secured; and no pains have been spared to ascertain the real facts, as well as to collect the picturesque gossip and legends, which have all the value of history in certain cases.





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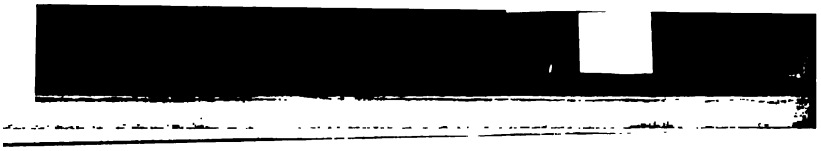
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Empresses of France

JOSEPHINE

THE first wife of Napoleon I., Rose Joséphine Tascher de la Pagerie, was born on her father's plantation, Les Trois-Islets at Martinique, on the 23rd of June, 1763. That same day the island was formally restored to France after the Seven Years' War; so Josephine was born of French parents on French soil.

Brought up like a little queen among her father's slaves, she learned to rule in her cradle, and as most of her life was spent out of doors amid the luxuriant tropical vegetation, she unconsciously imbibed a great love for Nature and flowers, colour and perfume.

Among her earliest recollections was a fearful hurricane which swept the island when she was only three years old, and in which she nearly lost her life. After a childhood spent on her father's estate, where her will was law, and where all lessons were in the form of play, Josephine was sent to a convent school at Port-Royal. There she received the usual education of a young lady, which consisted mostly in the practices of religion, with a mere smattering of accomplishments. This education finished, she returned home, and resumed her dreamy, indolent life there. In the course of a walk, she and her companions once visited an aged negress who told them their fortunes. The old woman predicted that Josephine would marry, have two children, lose her husband by a tragic death, and ended by exclaiming: "And then you will be Queen of France — yes; more than queen!"

Although little attention was paid to this prophecy at the time, some accounts state that the fortune-teller declared that Josephine would be very unhappy toward the end of her life, and would die in a hospital in a time of dire confusion. But this addition, as well as many of the details concerning her first marriage, are evidently later accretions, and the only part of the prophecy thoroughly authenticated refers to her becoming Queen of France.

Like most créoles — a name given to the children of European parents born in the West Indies or near the tropics — Josephine matured early, and when still a mere girl lost her heart to a young English lad. But this first love affair was soon checked by her parents, who decided to marry her to the son of an old neighbour who had returned to France. Josephine therefore set sail with her father, although she was still so childish that she took her doll with her to beguile the long hours on shipboard. Arrived at Brest, where the nineteen-year-old betrothed, Viscount de Beauharnais, welcomed them, the travellers went on to Fontainebleau, where Josephine was married on the 12th of December, 1779.

Shortly after the wedding, the sixteen-year-old bride was presented to Marie Antoinette, then at the height of her beauty and prosperity. Josephine's first home was in Paris, where her married life proved anything but happy. The young Viscount de Beauharnais, a favourite at court, wished his wife to shine in society; but as she was young and timid, and no beauty, in spite of her graceful form, blue eyes, brown hair, and regular features, she attracted very little attention. Hoping she might attain prominence by her intellectual gifts, which were of no mean order, the Viscount next urged Josephine to cultivate her mind. But the superficial education she had received had instilled no desire for knowledge, and



as Josephine was naturally indolent and pleasure-loving, she devoted little time to serious pursuits.

When her husband found fault with her, and drew unpleasant comparisons between her and the ladies whose society he frequented, she grew very jealous, and soon began to watch him closely. The young Viscount de Beauharnais was not free from the fashionable vices of the day, so before long she discovered sufficient cause for recrimination and tears, which only embittered her own life and made her position more difficult.

The birth of a son, Eugene, in September, 1781, did not effect any great change in the uncomfortable marital relations of the ill-assorted Beauharnais couple, and shortly after the birth of Hortense in 1783, the Viscount, influenced by calumny, began a suit for divorce. Although he accused Josephine of being unfaithful, no satisfactory proofs were ever produced, so the court not only acquitted her of all blame, but forced him to pay her alimony, while granting them a legal separation.

Another proof of Josephine's innocence of her husband's charges, is the continued kindness of her father-in-law, who not only took her to his own home at Fontainebleau, but devised all sorts of amusements to distract her from her sorrows. Once he even took her to the Trianon, where she recognised in the Queen's beautiful gardens many familiar tropical plants and flowers which she had loved as a child. While wandering through the palace that day, admiring its paintings, she suddenly found herself face to face with Marie Antoinette. The Queen, recognising her, spoke kindly to her, gave her the necklace she then wore, and, presenting her to the King, made him promise a commission to Josephine's son, who was of about the same age as the first Dauphin.

Notwithstanding the kindness of her father-in-law and of the royal couple, Josephine was so unhappy in France, that she finally decided to accept her father's invitation and return to Martinique. Leaving Eugene at school near Paris, under his grandfather's protection, she therefore set sail with Hortense, in 1788, and spent the next two years in her island home.

During that time, the Viscount de Beauharnais, who had incurred the displeasure of his family and the court by his unkind treatment of his wife, turned over a new leaf, and worked to such good purpose that he won an honourable position for himself. He also renewed relations with Josephine, and finally induced her to forgive the past and return to France in 1790.

Never a good manager of finances, Josephine found barely enough money to pay for her own and her daughter's passage, and her travelling outfit was so very scanty that Hortense, an active child of seven, set out with only one pair of shoes. A good mimic, she had learned to dance and sing like the negroes on her grandfather's plantation, and greatly amused the sailors during the long journey by her childish antics. But constant dancing soon wore out the soles of her shoes, and knowing her mother would keep her in the cabin if she discovered their sorry plight, the child carefully concealed it, until she hurt her foot upon a nail. Bloody footprints betrayed the pitiful state of affairs to Josephine, who, weeping profusely, kept the child below until one of her sailor friends came in quest of her. As soon as he learned the reason of Hortense's detention, he volunteered the gift of an old pair of shoes of his own, which, recut and resewn, served to protect the agile feet of the little dancer until they reached France. Many years later, when exhibiting the priceless treasures be-

stowed upon her by the Pope and crowned heads of Europe, Josephine laughingly told her ladies that among all the gifts she had ever received, the one which had pleased her most was the sailor's cast-off shoes!

Once re-united, the Beauharnais family lived together in "sweet concord," and in 1791 the Viscount became President of the Legislative Assembly. As such, he received the news of the King's escape and arrest at Varennes. But, although he respected and would fain have protected the unfortunate royal family, he was an ardent republican, and was therefore one of the first to give up his aristocratic title. For some time his house was a great social centre, and there Josephine met many of the noted people of the day. Older now, and less timid than when she first came to Paris as a bride, she did the honours of her salon with much of the graceful tact which later characterised her, and which has never been surpassed. Besides, her amiability and invariable kindness of heart soon won her many admirers. Although she took no part in the political discussions of the time, she proved an excellent listener, and thoroughly enjoyed all her social successes, for she was an innate coquette and always very anxious to please.

When the Legislative Assembly came to an end, the Viscount de Beauharnais was appointed general-in-chief of the army of the Rhine; but soon after the King's execution, all aristocrats became suspected of favouring the royal party. During the Reign of Terror, even the staunchest patriots were accused of conspiring against their country, if they bore aristocratic names, and General de Beauharnais, who had distinguished himself in his new office, was therefore deprived of his command and recalled to Paris. There Josephine urged him to emigrate while it was yet time; but Beauharnais insisted

that no one could molest so true a patriot as he, and, transferring his family to La Ferté, he settled down quietly to enjoy rural life with them.

While living at La Ferté, he learned of the trial and execution of the unhappy Queen Marie Antoinette, and his wife again urged him to emigrate. But, in spite of her prayers and sundry friendly warnings to escape while he could, Beauharnais remained calmly at home, until he, too, was suddenly arrested by order of the Committee of Safety.

Leaving her children in the care of a trusted servant and of an old aunt, Josephine immediately followed her husband to Paris, where she left no stone unturned to prove his innocence and effect his release. But the French Revolution was now in full swing; proofs of guilt were no longer necessary to sentence a man to death, and all Josephine could obtain was a permission to visit Beauharnais in prison. Before long, however, she, too, incurred the suspicions of the republicans, and was arrested and taken to the Carmelite Convent, which then served as a place of detention, all the ordinary prisons being overcrowded.

Here Josephine spent nearly four months of captivity. She was confined with many other ladies — whose only crime consisted in aristocratic name or title — in the room where one hundred and twenty priests had been massacred two years before. The apartment still bore traces of this sanguinary deed, and was generally known as the Room of the Three Swords, because a trio of bloody weapons, leaned against the wall after the massacre, had left indelible imprints upon its white surface. Huddled together in this awful place, the poor women strove by every means in their power to obtain news from without, and beguiled some of the weary hours of con-



finement by telling each other stories about their happy childhood.

Meanwhile, Josephine's two children, aged eleven and twelve, petitioned the government for their parents' release; but all they obtained was a permit to visit their mother once every two weeks. As all their interviews were in the presence of witnesses, who reported and distorted all they said, such meetings proved very unsatisfactory. But the Beauharnais soon discovered a way to outwit the prison authorities, and hid tiny notes inside the collar of Fortuné, the pet dog which they always brought into the prison with them. These, Josephine cleverly removed, while pretending to pet the little creature, concealing her answers in the same way, and thus managed for some time to correspond with her husband and friends. But she was soon to be deprived of this consolation also.

The property of all aristocrats was confiscated upon their imprisonment, so Josephine's faithful servant soon had to support Eugene and Hortense, who were finally apprenticed, by order of the government, to a cabinet-maker and to a seamstress. The children, kept hard at work by their task masters, were no longer allowed to visit their mother, and for some time were without tidings of either parent. Josephine, who had contrived by indirect means to ascertain that her husband had been transferred to the Conciergerie to be tried, therefore remained ignorant of his fate, until she saw his name in a list of the victims guillotined on the 7th of Thermidor, 1794.

The Viscount de Beauharnais, sentenced to die with forty-five other prisoners, spent his last moments in writing a touching farewell letter to Josephine. In this epistle he begged her pardon for all the sorrows he had

caused her, fully acquitted her of all blame in their past disagreements, foretold that she and France would yet be happy, and sent her, as a last souvenir, the hair which had just been cut off preparatory to his death. Letter and token were entrusted to a friend, who conveyed them safely to Josephine some time later, when she had been released from captivity in the Carmelite Convent.

Upon reading her husband's name among the last victims of the guillotine, Josephine fell to the ground in a swoon, and when she recovered consciousness gave way to such violent grief that she became very ill. Two days later, the gaoler came to remove her bed, and when she languidly inquired whether he meant to give her another to replace it, he roughly answered: "You won't need any, citizeness. You are ordered to the Conciergerie. You know where you go from that place!"

An eloquent gesture completed the sense of his phrase so unmistakably, that it wrung a cry of horror from all but Josephine, who neither feared nor hoped for death, but seemed utterly indifferent to all that was going on. She was not to be left without the poor comfort of a pallet, however, for the prison doctor immediately ordered her bed restored to her, saying her condition was so precarious that she would surely die within a week, and thus spare the Republic the expense of a trial and execution.

The gaoler gone, Josephine's companions crowded around her in tears; but she listlessly turned from the window out of which she was then gazing, and amazed them all by reminding them of the fortune-teller's prediction, saying: "Ladies, be comforted. I am not to die. Don't you know that I must first be queen?"



This sounded so much like mockery to her companions, that one of them bitterly retorted: "Then appoint your ladies of honour!"

Josephine, however, paying no heed to this sally, again gazed out of the window into the street below, where she now perceived a common woman trying to attract her attention. The poor creature first held up her rough woollen dress, then picked up a stone, and vanished with a gesture which was the exact counterpart of that made by the gaoler. Josephine, conjecturing that this by-play was intended to convey some message, tried to guess the riddle, murmuring: "Dress" (robe) "stone" (pierre) "guillotined!" without being able to understand. But just then one of the keepers kicked a barking dog, muttering: "Will you be quiet, you dog of a Robespierre!" The pantomime and the gaoler's half-uttered curse, were enough for the quick-witted Josephine, and as soon as the man was out of hearing, she triumphantly announced to her companions that Robespierre had fallen from power, and had evidently paid the penalty of his crimes.

These tidings caused great rejoicing among the prisoners, whose only hope lay in the bloody tyrant's fall. One of the captives, Madame de Fontenay, prided herself upon having caused his ruin, because she had written to her lover, Tallien, warning him that his name was on the proscription lists, and bidding him act at once or he would die. This note, carefully concealed in a cabbage stalk, and cast out of the prison window, was picked up by a friend and carried to Tallien, who, as Madame de Fontenay advised, acted boldly. The very day that Robespierre fell and was sentenced, this lady was released from prison; but, mindful of her fellow-captives, she procured their freedom two days later.

Josephine, a widow, ill and penniless, now went to join her family, and after a short time spent in mourning and regaining strength, returned to Paris to try and recover some of her husband's confiscated property for her own and her children's support. The beautiful Madame de Fontenay — now called Madame Tallien — kindly took Josephine under her protection, inviting her to dinner several times a week, and introducing her to all the influential people who might further her cause. Knowing Josephine's poverty, she thoughtfully supplied her most urgent needs and relieved her from all possible expense. For instance, wheat was then so scarce that only small rations of white bread were sold to persons rich enough to indulge in such a luxury. In issuing dinner invitations, therefore, ladies made it a rule to request their guests to bring their own bread. But Madame Tallien always made an exception in favour of Josephine, whom she generously supplied with this precious food.

Exerting every charm to attain her ends, Josephine won back a few fragments of her property. She also journeyed to Hamburg to arrange with a banker there for remittances from Martinique, and on her return rented a small house from actor Talma, in Chantereine Street. Here she lived for some time, frequenting republican society, not only because she delighted in company, but because she hoped thereby to further her own and her children's interests.

At that time her real poverty was cleverly concealed under an appearance of affluence, which she kept up by expedients, and it is said she had only six undergarments to sixteen dresses. A mistress of the art of pleasing, she revelled in the luxurious, licentious society which met in the drawing-room of Barras at the Luxembourg,



or in the salons of Madame Tallien, Madame de Staël, and other fast or fashionable ladies of the day.

Using all her arts of coquetry and dress, Josephine not only tried to reach her own ends by flattering Barras and the other members of the Convention, but won countless favours for former friends and acquaintances, in the same way. It was probably in the salon of Barras that she first met Napoleon Bonaparte, where, according to one account, he eagerly inquired who she was, while she was bending over a bunch of violets.

Four years before, young and unknown, this remarkable man, watching the attack upon the Tuileries, grimly muttered that if the King would only turn his cannon upon the mob, the revolt could soon be quelled. A year later, in 1793, at the siege of Toulon, he showed so much strategic skill, and won such distinction, that Barras, who was present on that occasion, chose him as helper, when called upon to put down the revolt of the sections on the 13th of Vendémiaire (October, 1795). Not only were the sections disarmed by Bonaparte's order, but searches were made in all the houses for any weapons which might be concealed there by the rebels.

According to one story, on the first anniversary of the Viscount de Beauharnais' death, Josephine gave Eugene his father's picture and sword. These he proudly hung up in his own room, and worshipping his father's memory, he soon induced six of his comrades to form with him the "Order of Filial Love," each member wearing a portrait of General de Beauharnais as badge and taking a solemn oath upon his famous sword. One day, on returning from school, Eugene was heartbroken to learn that this precious sword had been forcibly removed. He immediately sped to the Tuileries, where he eloquently pleaded with Bonaparte for its restitution.

Touched by the lad's filial love and patriotic fervour, Bonaparte restored the weapon, and treated him so kindly that Josephine felt it incumbent upon her to call and thank the republican officer.

Flattered by the visit of this graceful lady, who bore an old and aristocratic name, Bonaparte soon returned her call, and having fallen violently in love with her at first sight, began to woo her with all the impetuous ardour of his nature. Meeting her at Barras', Tallien's, and in all the fashionable salons, and assuming that she must be as prosperous as she appeared, Bonaparte, although dependent upon his pay only, urged her to marry him soon. But his own family greatly opposed the match, and Josephine's two children also objected, at first; while Barras did all he could to favour the plan. It may be, as some authorities claim, that the latter had grown weary of Josephine's extravagance and constant importunity in behalf of her friends, and that he was anxious to provide for her, so she should cease to trouble him. The fact remains, however, that he urged her to accept the General's hand, for he said: —

"I want you to marry little Bonaparte, whom I shall name general-in-chief, for I am reserving for him the conquest of Italy."

At that time Josephine was not in love with Bonaparte, but merely flattered by his devotion, for many people now endorsed Barras' opinion: "That Corsican will do great things." Her first marriage had not proved a success, and although far from being an inconsolable widow, she considered a Bonaparte rather beneath her in rank. Besides, the new suitor impressed her as too visionary to prove a desirable husband, and she openly marvelled at his independence and conceit when he hotly resented Barras' patronage, crying:



BONAPARTE AND EUGENE DE BEAUHARNAIS.
Grenier.





Josephine

"Do they think I need protection to insure success? Some day they will be only too happy if I grant them mine. My sword is at my side, and that will carry me a long way."

On the part of so young and untried an officer, this language did seem boastful in the extreme, and Josephine was not blind to that fact. But, at the same time, she stood in some awe of her strange suitor, for she wrote to a friend: —

"I admire the General's courage, the extent of his information about all manner of things, concerning which he talks equally well; the quickness of his intelligence, which makes him catch the thought of another even before it is expressed; but I confess that I am afraid of the power he seems to wield over all about him. His piercing scrutiny has in it something strange and inexplicable, that awes even our Directors: think, then, how it frightens a woman."

The result was, that unable to resist Bonaparte's energetic wooing, Josephine finally consented to marry him, reasoning that a civil contract — the only one current at that time — could easily be broken, should she ever wish to recover her freedom. The match seemed so far beneath her, however, that her lawyer vehemently remonstrated when she told him about it, although she had entered his study with a stranger, who gazed dreamily out of the window while she transacted her business. The lawyer, finding her obstinate, finally exclaimed: "Bonaparte! Why, madame, he has nothing but his hat and his sword!"

These words were uttered in tones so loud, that it was impossible the stranger should not have heard them, and Josephine, wishing to end an embarrassing interview, laughingly addressed him, saying: —

"General, have you heard what Monsieur Raguideau has said?"

"Yes," answered Bonaparte, turning around suddenly, "and he has spoken like an honest man. What he has said to you makes me esteem him highly. I hope he will continue to take charge of our affairs, for I am ready to trust him wholly."

The banns were now published, and Bonaparte announced his coming marriage to the government, saying: "It is a new tie which binds me to my country; another pledge of my firm resolve to stake my fate on the Republic."

Two weeks after the first notification of his coming marriage, Bonaparte received the promised appointment as General-in-Chief of the Army of Italy, and on the 9th of March, 1796, he and Josephine were united in matrimony in the presence of Barras, Lemarrois, Tallien, and Calmelet, who signed their names as witnesses on the marriage register. As it was impossible to obtain legal papers from Martinique just then, owing to the war, Josephine was dispensed from producing her certificate of birth, and could thus approximate her age to Bonaparte's, making herself appear four years younger than she actually was, while he resorted to a similar stratagem to make himself seem two years older. Both bride and groom, therefore, registered their ages as twenty-eight, and, leaving the tribunal, went to Josephine's tiny house, 6 rue Chantereine, where they spent a brief honeymoon.

This was Bonaparte's first serious passion, and all his friends bear witness that he felt it with all the energy of his character. He knew, however, that Josephine did not yet love him, and when urged to depart for Italy and conquer, passionately exclaimed: "A conquest! I crave but one, the heart of Josephine!"



Josephine

In spite of his unmistakable passion for his newly-wedded wife, his passion for glory was still greater, and even during the two short days he spent with Josephine at 6 rue Chantereine, he managed to lock himself up in another room to study his maps and plan his coming campaign. When she rapped on the door, begging admittance, he told her through the keyhole that they must adjourn love until victory was won. Two days after his wedding, Bonaparte tore himself away from Josephine, and set out with Junot for Nice. During that post-journey, he made sundry stops, and every time he paused to rest, he dashed off vehement love-letters to Josephine, in which he wrote: "You are the perpetual object of my thoughts, my imagination exhausts itself in wondering what you are doing. If I picture you sad, my heart is rent and my sorrow increased. If you seem merry, playful with your friends, I upbraid you for having so readily forgotten our painful separation of three long days."

Far more in love than his wife, he even vows he is not sure he has rested well until he knows she has slept peacefully, and all his letters testify to the intense fervour of his affection for his absent bride.

On the 22nd of March, Bonaparte reached the headquarters of the Army of Italy at Nice, and by a fervid proclamation to the soldiers roused their enthusiasm and confidence to the highest pitch. But even in the midst of his constant absorbing duties, and on the eve of his first battle, he still found time to write love-letters to Josephine, in which he declares that the history of his life is expressed in the words: "To live for Josephine!" and pleads incoherently for her love, saying: "Love me like your eyes; but no, that is not enough; love me like yourself, more than yourself, like your thought, your mind, your life, your all!"



In one letter he is full of hope, grateful for any token of affection on her part, and charmed with anything she writes. In the next, he is extravagantly jealous, complains of her coldness, and vows he fears nothing so much as losing his place in her heart. All his hopes centre in her, and on "Fate," in which he places a curious trust, as he testifies by having the words "To Destiny" inscribed inside Josephine's wedding ring.

During the second week in April, 1796, Bonaparte writes: "A loving thought from my only wife, and a victory from fate, that is what I long for; a single thought, an undivided one, worthy of the one who thinks of you at every moment of the day!"

Although history does not state whether the undivided thought for which he longed ever fell to his lot, we know that he won the battle of Montenotte on the morrow, and two days later that of Millesimo. During the armistice of Cherasco, which followed these triumphs, he despatched Junot to Paris with the captured flags, entrusting to his care a passionate letter to Josephine, in which he implores her to place herself under the protection of Junot and of Joseph Bonaparte, and join him without delay, or he will fall ill with longing for her.

Junot made such good speed on this errand, that he posted from Nice to Paris in one hundred and twenty hours, and when the news of the French triumph in Italy became known in the capital, the people became almost delirious with joy. Josephine, hearing Bonaparte's name in every mouth, no longer regretted her marriage, and during the next few weeks greatly enjoyed being the cynosure of all eyes at the patriotic demonstrations in honour of the victories her husband had won. Dressed with the utmost care, and escorted by the handsome young Junot, she gracefully descended the



steps of the Luxembourg on the 10th of May, revelling in the sensation she created; for every one was saying, —

"There, that 's his wife. . . . That 's his aide-de-camp. . . . How pretty she is! Long live General Bonaparte! Long live Citizeness Bonaparte! She is kind to poor folks."

Her slender, supple form, graceful carriage, dainty dress, and careful use of cosmetics, so cleverly concealed her real age, that the spectators really thought her both young and beautiful, and even her detractors admitted that Madame Bonaparte was still lovely then. The cheers of the people, however, would have been even louder and more enthusiastic on this occasion, had they but known that the man whom they were acclaiming had just won the battle of Lodi, and that he was to make a triumphal entrance in Milan on the 15th. But the arrival of these joyful tidings a few days later afforded an excuse for new celebration, on the Champ de Mars, on the 29th of May, where there were more cheers and a new ovation for Josephine.

This was the Golden Age of the French Republic, when officers and soldiers were all alike young and enthusiastic, when they all thirsted for fame more than gain, and when Bonaparte, who won his nickname of "Little Corporal" at the battle of Lodi, exultantly cried: "With twenty thousand men like those, one could sweep all across Europe!" When he said this, one of his stalwart grenadiers confidently retorted: "Let the Little Corporal go on leading us at this rate, and I promise he won't find us lagging behind!"

But although Bonaparte was received with the wildest enthusiasm at Milan, although the most charming ladies crowded around him seeking his favour, he constantly longed for Josephine, and had no eyes for any other



woman. At the state reception on the 16th of May, at the planting of the Liberty Tree, and at the gala performance at the Scala on the 18th, he ardently wished that Josephine were beside him, sharing his triumphs; wondered at her delay in joining him, and waxed jealous because he fancied himself forgotten. Like most true lovers, he was nervous and superstitious, and when the glass over her picture — which he constantly wore next his heart — was accidentally broken, he turned fearfully pale, and despairingly cried that Josephine must be either ill or unfaithful!

The fact was, however, that Josephine was not ill at all, but enjoying his triumphs in the midst of her friends. Parisian society now seemed doubly fascinating to her; she delighted in all the adulation she received, was far too indolent not to dread a long, fatiguing journey, and therefore kept postponing her departure from day to day. Bonaparte's fiery letters tickled her vanity without touching her heart very deeply, for when he became so jealous and despairing that he tragically wrote: "Beware of Othello's dagger!" she laughed indulgently, and gently remarked to her friends: "Bonaparte is very funny!"

As a last pretext she took advantage of a slight indisposition to hint that it might be wiser to abstain from so long a journey when in an interesting condition. This letter cast Bonaparte into a fever of anxiety and apprehension, and called forth an answer, part of which is given here:—

"I care for honour because you do, for victory because it gratifies you, otherwise I would have left all else to throw myself at your feet. Dear friend, be sure and say that you are convinced that I love you above all that can be imagined,— convinced that every moment of my time is consecrated to you; that never an hour



passes without thought of you; that it never occurred to me to think of another woman; that they are all, in my eyes, without grace, without beauty, without wit; that you — you alone, as I see you, as you are — could please and absorb all the faculties of my soul; that you have fathomed all its depths; that my heart has no fold hidden from you, no thoughts which are not attendant upon you; that my strength, my arms, my mind, are all yours; that my soul is in your form, and that the day you change, or the day you cease to live, will be that of my death; that nature, the earth, is lovely in my eyes only because you dwell within it. If you do not believe all this, if your soul is not permeated, saturated with this thought, you distress me, you do not love me. Between those who love there is a magnetic bond. You know that I could never see you with a lover, much less endure your having one; to see him and to tear out his heart would for me be one and the same thing; and then, if I could, I would lay violent hands upon your sacred person. . . . No, I would never dare, but I would leave a world where that which is most virtuous had deceived me. I trust in and am proud of your love. Misfortunes are trials which mutually develop the strength of our passion. A child lovely as its mother is to see the light in your arms. Wretched man that I am, a single day would satisfy me! A thousand kisses on your eyes, on your lips. Adorable woman! What a power you have! I am sick when you are sick; besides, I have a burning fever. Detain the courier only six hours, and let him return at once, bringing to me the darling letter of my queen."

Not content with writing thus to his wife, he also sends an extravagant letter to his brother, imploring him to forward tidings of Josephine, and offering to give up

everything and return to Paris, if she cannot travel without endangering her precious health, for he can no longer live without her.

These letters and the complete disappearance of all symptoms which could have prevented her journey, finally induced Josephine to tear herself away from her beloved Paris, leaving Hortense in Madame Campan's boarding-school. Stepping into her travelling carriage, on the 24th of June, — sobbing as if her heart would break, — Josephine, attended by her maid, and escorted by her brother-in-law, Junot, and another officer, set out for Italy. Her tears were soon dried, however, and some writers claim that she beguiled the weary hours of the journey by a very lively flirtation with one of her fellow-travellers. On the way to Italy, they met sundry couriers, all bearing letters from Bonaparte to Josephine, who could not help being flattered by these constant tokens of her husband's devotion. Besides, her journey seemed one long ovation, and when she reached Milan, she was met at the city gate by Duke Serbelloni, who formally escorted her to his beautiful palace, which had been placed at the victorious general's disposal.

Bonaparte, who had been watching for Josephine with such feverish impatience, was, to his great chagrin, absent from the city just then; but as soon as duty permitted, he hastened to join his beloved wife. One of his friends, writing of this time, states: "At Milan, General Bonaparte was very happy, for then he lived for his wife only. Such was the state of affairs for a long time. Never did a purer, truer, more exclusive love take possession of the heart of a man, and this was a man of a superior order."

The fact of his superiority was now very apparent to Josephine, for the bridegroom from whom she had parted



a few weeks before, the penniless young officer whose alliance had been considered far beneath her, had already attained an exalted position, and was even then treating with Pope and kings as with equals. The whole peninsula rang with his name, because he had freed northern Italy from bondage, claiming, in exchange for his services, great sums of money and priceless art treasures, which greatly enriched France. Besides, he was about to renew the war with the Austrians, under Würmser, a fact which forced him again to part from Josephine, whom he promised to send for as soon as he could.

Every courier brought her new letters just as passionate as before, assuring her of his constant love and devotion, and saying: "Incessantly I recall to memory your kisses, your tears, your delightful jealousy, and Josephine's peerless charms incessantly kindle a live and burning flame in my heart and in my senses. When shall I — free from care, from all claims of duty — be able to spend every instant beside you, to have nothing to do but to love you, nothing to think of, but to talk to you of my love and to prove it to you. . . . I thought I loved you a few days ago, but since I have seen you again I feel that I love you a thousand times more." Such is his love for her that it includes all she cares for; her children even seem like his own, and although he heartily dislikes dogs, he is so infatuated, that he sends "Millions of kisses, and even to Fortuné, in spite of his naughtiness."

Love and warfare fill all his heart and mind, and although in the very midst of military operations, he still finds time for sentimental walks by moonlight along the shores of the Italian lakes, where he dreams of Josephine. Two days without news drive him almost frantic, and when a courier arrives at last and fails to bring a letter



from her, he who sent her "a thousand kisses as hot as my heart, as pure as yourself," writes, in playful reproach:

"Shame upon you. You are a wicked, cruel, homely tyrant; a pretty little monster. If I could, you know, lock you up in my heart, I would imprison you there for ever!"

After the victory of Castiglione, he immediately sends for her, because he fancies she brings him good luck, and considers her the embodiment of his "Star." He is right, for it is she who determines him to leave Brescia, a few hours before Würmser attacks the city, and thus saves him from capture. Josephine, herself caught in the eddying tide of warfare, sheds bitter tears at the sight of the wounded, and Bonaparte, beside himself with rage, then grinds his teeth and registers a grim vow that "Würmser shall pay dear for the tears you shed." He further declares, with all a lover's exaltation: "I will comfort her. She shall have all joys, all glories. I will make that face, now bathed in tears, beam with delight."

Fired by love and ambition, Bonaparte, after sending Josephine to central Italy, begins a six days' campaign, which, after two battles and four fights, leaves him victorious, with twenty-one flags and 16,000 prisoners.

Josephine, in the meanwhile, has been in imminent danger of capture and death, for she barely left the chapel where she had taken refuge, when it was entirely destroyed by Austrian cannon balls from Mantua. During this brief separation Bonaparte again writes: "Absence is horrible; the nights are long, wearisome, and lonely; the days monotonous. A thousand kisses, very sweet, very tender, very exclusive! In a few days we shall see each other again; that is the sweetest reward for all my fatigue and efforts."



Josephine

Josephine, in writing to her aunt and sending gifts to her children, now declares that she is weary of the honours lavished upon her, and complains of her health; but she concludes her letter, saying: "I have the most amiable husband one could find. I have not even time to wish for anything. My will is his. He worships me all day long, just as if I were a divinity; it is impossible to find a better husband." But while she vows she can find no fault with him, he gently chides her for not writing more often and fully, and threatens to pounce upon her unexpectedly, some dark night, just as if he were a jealous spouse, adding: "Your letters are as cold as if you were fifty, as cold as if they were written after fifteen years of marriage!"

Soon, however, he has other causes of anxiety besides Josephine's fancied coldness, for the Directory fails to send the troops and supplies he asks, and, jealous of his fame, threatens to divide the command he has hitherto held alone. Bonaparte, incensed, asks for his release, pleading impaired health; which is no vain excuse, for he is now a prey to malarial fever, as well as to the skin disease which troubled him ever since the siege of Toulon. Still, in the midst of battles, disappointment, sickness, cares, and excitement, he never forgets Josephine, but sends her hasty, illegible, misspelled, eccentric letters, full of passionate protests of ardent love, and of longing to be with her once more.

On the eve of Arcola, he is again despondent, and the situation seems so precarious to everyone that the Milanese, dreading that the worst may come, keep close watch night and day over Josephine, lest she should slip away and abandon them to their fate. But although it seems as if Bonaparte cannot escape from the Austrian toils, he slips out of Verona on November 14th, to return



triumphant four days later, having won a great victory at Arcola.

Exposure during this brief campaign brings on new attacks of fever, and, being in a morbid frame of mind, he again doubts Josephine's love. His suspicions increase, when, upon returning unexpectedly to Milan, he finds that she has gone to Genoa. But her absence is legitimate, for that repentant city is giving a brilliant fête in her honour. While there, she is so busy receiving visits and congratulations, attending balls and hearing serenades, that she finds no time to write him a line. But although Bonaparte reproaches her, he confesses it is foolish on his part to expect "lace to weigh as much as gold," and fervently prays: "May fate concentrate in my heart all sorrow and troubles, but may it grant to my Josephine none but happy and prosperous days." His fit of morbid jealousy is entirely dispelled by his wife's return, however, and contemporary writings testify to her happy influence over him. "The General-in-chief was then steeped in the bliss of his marriage; Madame Bonaparte was charming, and all the cares of the government of Italy did not prevent her husband from revelling in all the happiness of his home."

By this time Bonaparte had assumed all the state his position demanded, and the glittering pink-granite Serbelloni palace was the centre of a brilliant military court, which included eight of the General's aides-de-camp. Here Josephine presided with ineffable grace. She was so fascinating, and so cleverly seconded her husband's efforts, that she fully justified his proud boast: "I win battles; Josephine wins me hearts."

Bonaparte's name had now become so famous, and France was so proud of him, that the Directory commissioned the artist Gros to paint his portrait, flag in



hand, as he appeared on the bridge of Arcola. The painter, therefore, came to Milan, where he vainly begged for a sitting. But the successful General had not the patience for such an ordeal, and Josephine, forced to resort to stratagem, held her husband fast on her lap for a few moments every day after breakfast, as that was the only way in which he could be induced to pose for his famous picture. Bonaparte was then the slender, sallow youth with the inspired glance, so ably depicted by Gros, and whenever any of the émigrés saw him, they deemed this unhealthy colour a sure sign of early demise, and openly rejoiced at the prospect of being soon rid of the republican general.

Bonaparte's happy life at Milan was again interrupted by a last desperate effort on the part of General Würmser to recover lost ground. But the battles of Rivoli, La Favorita, and Corona, forced him to evacuate Mantua early in February, 1797, and thus enabled Bonaparte to dictate terms of peace to Austria. During this campaign, notwithstanding his many triumphs, Bonaparte writes to Josephine: "I never was so bored as during this horrid war." Then, learning that she is ill, he becomes almost frantic, and says: "Believe me, nothing equals my love for you, unless it is my anxiety."

On the 19th of February, 1797, Bonaparte signed the treaty of Tolentino with the Pope, and sent word to Josephine to join him as soon as possible, charging her meanwhile: "Write to me, think of me, and love me. Thine for life." Although most of Bonaparte's letters written during this war have been carefully preserved, most of Josephine's are lost; but they are said to have been comparatively cold and fragmentary, for at that time, the love was mostly on his side, she graciously allowing herself to be adored.



The Italians, who loved Bonaparte because they could claim him as a fellow-countryman, greatly admired Josephine's graceful self-possession, and the nobles, recognising her as their equal, did not resent her exalted position or begrudge her the gifts and homage showered upon her. Then, too, Josephine still exerted considerable influence over Barras, her tact preventing many a serious collision between Bonaparte and the Directory.

Although thirty-four years old and somewhat faded, she made so skilful a use of paint and powder that she still appeared youthful, and her husband was so enamoured that he was absolutely faithful to her, although fidelity on the part of a man was not the rule in his day. He, therefore, deserved great credit, for many fair creatures had tried to shake him in his allegiance to Josephine. This circumspect conduct, however, proved good policy too, for had he given way to any excesses, he would undoubtedly have incurred the censure of the older officers, who were already somewhat jealous of his superior talents and position.

The heat proving oppressive in the city, Bonaparte and his household removed in May to the charming castle of Montebello, five miles from Milan, where he spent three months, surrounded by a host of generals, army contractors, noblemen, ladies, etc. Here, too, he received his mother, his two brothers, Joseph and Louis, and his three sisters, Pauline, Eliza, and Caroline. For their entertainment, the "court of Montebello" made several excursions to the Italian lake region, visiting many interesting places, including the charming Borromean islands. It was at Montebello, also, that Pauline Bonaparte, young, pretty, and giddy, was married to General Leclerc, Bonaparte having consented to this match principally because he thought it would please the republican party.



Josephine

One of Bonaparte's favourite amusements at this time was telling ghost stories at nightfall, and he was never so happy as when he had frightened Josephine so sorely that she clung timidly to him. Besides he often left his work for a few moments to join his guests in the garden at Montebello, and once slyly shook a heavily laden tree so that the fruit came thumping down upon the heads and shoulders of the fair ladies collected beneath it. Most of them ran away screaming and laughing; but Josephine stood quite still, and when Bonaparte congratulated her upon standing fire as well as his grenadiers, she sweetly answered: "And why should I not? Am I not the wife of their commander?"

Her pet dog Fortuné, having accompanied her thither, Bonaparte once pointed him out to a guest, saying with mock fury: "Do you see his lordship yonder? He's my rival. He was in full possession of madame's bed when I married her. I tried to oust him, but in vain. I was told I must make up my mind to share the bed with him, or sleep alone elsewhere. It vexed me considerably, but there was no alternative. So I made the best of it. But he — the favourite — proved less accommodating than I, and I still bear tokens of that fact on my leg."

Bonaparte was soon avenged, however, for Fortuné, having ventured to attack a big dog belonging to the cook, was suddenly caught in the mongrel's teeth and flung aside a moment later with a broken spine. The cook, trembling lest the General's wrath should be visited upon him, was greatly relieved when Bonaparte secretly tipped him, confessing that he was not at all sorry to be rid of his wife's troublesome pet.

On the 14th of July, 1797, on the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, Bonaparte and his court returned



to Milan, where a grand military celebration took place, to the great delight of the Milanese. Although Bonaparte was very republican in his tastes, and in general simple and unostentatious, he knew when and how to dazzle people by his pomp, and loved to impress the public by an occasional display which, although somewhat theatrical according to present views, never failed to produce the effect he desired.

Although very busy looking after the welfare of his troops, and arranging for the government of the recently freed and conquered provinces, Bonaparte was not blind to the political intrigues at home. It was during the summer of 1797 that he sent Augereau to Paris with an army of twelve thousand men, to uphold the authority of the Directory or executive party, which was then at odds with the legislative party or the Council of Five Hundred. In doing this, he defeated the plans of the Moderates and Royalists on the 18th of Fructidor, and thus prevented a new outbreak of civil war in France.

Pauline's marriage festivities being ended, and the Bonaparte family having again departed, the General and Josephine went on to Passeriano, to meet a new Austrian commissioner, and settle the terms of the much discussed peace. The Emperor of Austria, hoping to awe his adversary, sent a finished diplomat, the Count of Cobentzel. But although this nobleman fancied it would be a comparatively easy task to intimidate Bonaparte by his grand manner and diplomatic skill, he soon found the republican general more than a match for him.

The Directory, jealous of Bonaparte's fame, proved so troublesome at this time, that all Josephine's efforts were required to keep the peace between her husband and Barras, whose jealousy and antagonism were growing



daily. Bonaparte, therefore, again offered to resign, but his proposal was not accepted, because the Directors dreaded the censure of the people, a contingency which Bonaparte had foreseen and which enabled him to carry out his own plans more fully.

The Venetians, whom he had determined to sacrifice in order to wrest Mantua and the Adige from Austria, now invited him to visit their city, offering to give a celebration in his honour. Lacking in truth and honour, and most unscrupulous, Bonaparte could nevertheless not accept such an invitation from a people he meant to betray, so he sent Josephine in his stead, and she graced the celebration with all her wonted benevolence and amiability. During the four days of perpetual enchantment she spent in Venice, there were regattas by day and by night on the Grand Canal and Lagoons, illuminations, serenades, balls, and torchlight processions. Flowers, gifts, and speeches were showered upon her, and the great officers of the republic did their best to please her, and thus conciliate the favour of her husband. But in the midst of these festivities, their hearts were sore, for French experts had come to select the works of art which were to be sent as tribute to Paris, and in punishment for a popular uprisal in the spring the bronze horses were removed from St. Mark's. Not only were these and other masterpieces carried off, but the state ship "Bucentaur" was destroyed, because it could not weather the storms to which it would be exposed during a round-about journey to Paris, and the French would not leave such a trophy in the hands of the Venetians.

While Josephine was receiving this superb ovation from the Venetian authorities, and the French troops in garrison there, Bonaparte was hastening the conclusion of the treaty, which he was determined to sign before



the Directory could interfere with his plans. Finding the Austrians still inclined to temporise, he clinched matters by giving vent to a simulated burst of passion, wherein he seized a trayful of precious china, — the gift of the Russian empress Catherine, — and violently dashed it to pieces on the floor, crying: "You want war; well, you shall have it. See, your Austrian Monarchy will be broken up like that before three months are over!"

Then he marched out of the room where the conference had been held, and mounting his horse, rode away without deigning to listen to the apologies and explanations offered by the Austrian plenipotentiaries. They were so thoroughly frightened by this volcanic outburst of fury, that they consented the selfsame day to the conditions he imposed. Bonaparte immediately became as amiable as if no difference had occurred, and, while waiting for the clerks to finish drafting the double copies of the treaty of Campo Formio, entertained the Austrian diplomats with ghost stories, told so graphically that they greatly frightened poor Josephine. When the copies were finished, the treaty of Campo Formio was duly signed, and arrangements were made for an exchange of prisoners, which included among other famous people, Madame Royale, the daughter of Louis XVI., now only released from her prison in the Temple.

Bonaparte proudly refused the estates, titles, and millions offered him by the Emperor of Germany, and accepted only six magnificent horses. But although he posed as modest and disinterested, the war booty had been immense; and while he affected to leave it all to his officers and men, he secured considerable money for himself, as well as for his ever-greedy and needy family.

The treaty signed, Bonaparte went back to Milan,



and proceeded from thence to Turin, where the King of Sardinia presented him with a beautiful horse, around whose neck he had also hung a magnificent diamond necklace for Josephine. At Turin, Bonaparte parted with his wife, and while the former journeyed northward to attend the peace congress at Rastadt, Josephine remained in Italy to see her son Eugene, then garrisoned there.

When Bonaparte reached Paris on the 5th of December, 1797, Josephine had not yet arrived; so his brothers, who had always opposed the marriage, and who dreaded her influence, took advantage of her absence to try and poison his mind against her. In fact, the Bonaparte family, Barras, and several other noted persons, accuse Josephine of having led a fast and immoral life, not only before Beauharnais died, and during her widowhood, but even after her marriage with Bonaparte. Many writers claim, however, that while her conduct was undoubtedly frivolous, and often imprudent, no fault was proved against her either during her first or second marriage; although others acknowledge that Josephine was anything but inconsolable during her period of mourning, and that she followed the corrupt examples of her principal associates during those licentious times.

However this may be, the machinations of his family, his own jealousy, and current gossip, could not destroy Bonaparte's love for his wife, whom he welcomed gladly on her return. It is said by some that she came back in time to witness from a balcony the grand fête given at the Luxembourg, on the 10th of December, in honour of the treaty of Campo Formio. There, in the presence of the government and the people, Bonaparte solemnly delivered the treaty he had just signed, and gave a modest account of the sixty-seven battles he



had fought during the Italian campaign. But while Josephine was radiant, he seemed rather indifferent to, and even bored by the constant acclamations of the enthusiastic people.

Early in January, 1798, he and Josephine attended a grand ball given by Talleyrand, where Josephine shone with all her wonted grace, and where Madame de Staël insisted upon being presented to the hero of the evening. This presentation Bonaparte tried to elude, for in his youth he was always embarrassed in the presence of ladies, never knew how to address them, and particularly objected to blue stockings. Madame de Staël, who was as voluble as she was enthusiastic, paraded her admiration for him, and, hoping to win a compliment, inquired coquettishly: "General, which woman do you love and admire most?"

"My wife!" answered Bonaparte, coolly.

"That is a matter of course, but what kind of a woman would you prize most highly?"

"The one who could keep house best."

"I can understand that too; but tell me, whom would you consider first among women?"

"The one who bore the most children."

This disconcerting answer so thoroughly quenched the enthusiasm of the fair writer that she withdrew, informing her escort that Bonaparte was a strange character indeed. But some people claim that this repulse roused her antipathy, and kindled in her vindictive breast the first spark of the hatred with which she was to pursue Bonaparte as long as she lived, and which was to work him such incalculable harm.

We are told, however, that Bonaparte received Madame de Staël thus coolly, principally because she had written him admiring letters in Italy, in which she was tactless

enough to pity him for being married to so insignificant a creature as Josephine, and wherein she hinted quite plainly that she — Madame de Staël — was far better fitted by nature to be the mate of a man of genius. These letters incensed and disgusted Bonaparte, who hotly exclaimed: "How can a blue stocking, a manufacturess of sentiment, dare to compare herself to Josephine! I shall not answer those letters!"

Although many ladies besides Madame de Staël tried to attract and monopolise Bonaparte's attention at Talleyrand's ball, he remained close to his wife the whole evening, seemed entirely wrapped up in his admiration of her, and offered no one else any attentions. On all sides, however, he received nothing but compliments and congratulations, for every one was eager to please him. David was commissioned to paint his picture for the Directory, and even theatre managers obsequiously inquired what plays the General preferred, whenever he honoured them by his presence. When Bonaparte asked one of them whether it would be possible to give, in the same evening, two short plays which he wished to see, the manager happily remarked: "Nothing is impossible for General Bonaparte; he has struck that word out of our dictionary."

Josephine enjoyed her husband's glory to the full, and when Eugene returned from Italy, and Hortense came home from boarding-school for a visit, her cup of happiness would have been quite full, had it not been for the continued malevolence of her husband's relations, who lost no occasion to find fault with all she said and did. Her salon was again a social centre; but although Bonaparte was a soldier, he seemed to enjoy most the society of literary men, gave dinners in their honour, and spent hours in conversation with them. Fearing lest



the people would grow accustomed to him, and cease to applaud him if he became an old story, Bonaparte appeared in public very seldom, but often remarked to Josephine that he must do something great if he would maintain his exalted position in the eyes of the world. Still, notwithstanding this greed for popular applause, none knew its value better than he; for when some one complimented him on the ovations he was receiving, he once cynically remarked: "Bah! the people would crowd around just as eagerly if I were being led to the scaffold!"

Bonaparte, however, soon wearied of inaction, complained that "Paris weighed upon him like a leaden mantle," and finding the proposed invasion of England impracticable, he suddenly determined to execute a long cherished plan, and to wage war against that country in Egypt. This project received the full sanction of the Directory, who were not aware, however, that Bonaparte undertook the expedition in the hope of founding an Eastern Empire, or, failing that, to enhance his glory, for he intended his coming Eastern triumphs to serve as stepping stones to the first position in France as soon as a favourable opportunity occurred. His plans were so cleverly made, that the public did not even suspect he was on the eve of departure, when, on the 3rd of May, 1798, he and Josephine dined with Barras, and then went to the theatre to see Talma. On returning home at midnight, Bonaparte abruptly informed Josephine that they would start for Toulon in a couple of hours, and, without giving her time to bid farewell to her daughter, who had returned to Madame Campan's boarding-school, hurried her into the carriage and drove away.

This journey proved very uneventful until near the end, when an overhanging branch striking the carriage,



brought the horses to a sudden stand-still on the very brink of a broken bridge, where Bonaparte and Josephine would have perished in the darkness, had not their advance been so fortunately checked.

Bonaparte, who had taken Josephine with him to enjoy her company as long as possible, told her on reaching Toulon, on the 9th of May, that she could go no farther with him, but that he would send for her as soon as circumstances would permit. He further urged, in case his absence were prolonged, that she should betake herself to the baths of Plombières, for the cure her physicians recommended. Their parting in the Independence Hotel was very affecting, Bonaparte shedding copious tears, and embarking only at the last moment upon the overladen ship. From a balcony in this hotel, Josephine saw the vessel raise anchor, and watched it sail out of sight. Two letters from Malta, robbed her of all hope of joining Bonaparte for the present, and it proved fortunate that she did not set out, for the vessel upon which she had planned to sail soon fell into the hands of the English.

Josephine, abandoning all intention of joining her husband, now went on to Plombières, in the Vosges Mountains, to spend three months there, taking the baths, and drinking the waters, which were to restore her impaired health, and, the physicians hoped, enable her in time to become a mother. There she found a numerous party of gay friends from Paris, for the prevalent clinging fashion, which necessitated the wearing of but one garment under low-necked and short-sleeved gowns, considerably increased the rate of mortality among women, and was the cause of much ill-health.

One day, when Josephine was on a wooden balcony, nineteen feet above ground, the flimsy structure suddenly



gave way beneath her, and she fell to the ground, half buried under the ruins. At first, every one thought such a fall must prove fatal, and Josephine begged for Hortense, who hastened to Plombières to bid her mother farewell. But, by the time she reached the baths, it had already been ascertained that, aside from severe contusions, Josephine was quite unharmed. Treated like a sovereign, — a daily bulletin being despatched to Barras, so he could keep her Paris friends informed of her progress, — Josephine's convalescence proved very agreeable. The regimental band came daily from the neighbouring garrison to serenade her, sundry deputations congratulated her upon her narrow escape, and so many flowers, gifts, and attentions were showered upon her, that she found time pass very pleasantly until she was able to resume her cure and wonted amusements.

It was while she was still at Plombières that Josephine received her first letters from Egypt, and when she returned to Paris in September, she made final arrangements for the purchase of Malmaison, a pretty country residence about five miles from Versailles. Bonaparte, on leaving, had particularly enjoined upon her the acquisition of a country place, where he could retire whenever he longed to rest, and where she could gratify her taste for nature and flowers. Josephine secured this estate for 160,000 francs, Bonaparte having left her the necessary funds for the first payments, and immediately began remodelling and furnishing the house to suit herself, adorning it with many of the art treasures she had collected in Italy.

After spending the autumn at Malmaison, Josephine returned to her Paris house, which Bonaparte had purchased, — in the street which now bore the name Victoire, in compliment to his achievements in Italy, — and



there spent a delightful winter in the midst of her friends, enjoying the social intercourse she loved. Her continued acquaintance with Madame Tallien, however, brought her in contact with the fastest set of the day, in a constant round of balls, dinners, and receptions. Josephine herself entertained every Thursday, and while possessing only the vaguest notions of literature, did the honours of her salon with such captivating courtesy, was so uniformly kind, and so good a listener, that all the learned men of the time frequented her house.

But her husband's relatives found fault with all this gaiety, and Madame Lætitia Bonaparte would fain have seen her graver, more dignified, and especially less lavish with her money. Economy, the pet virtue of Bonaparte's mother, formed, however, no part of Josephine's programme, and although jewels had been showered upon her in Italy, and she already possessed a notable collection of cameos and pearls, she never could resist purchasing any gem which caught her fancy. Her dress, too, cost exorbitant sums; for she went everywhere, and prided herself upon being always gowned to perfection. When the Bonapartes advised her to live more modestly, and to avoid being seen in certain houses, she truthfully declared that Bonaparte depended upon her to watch over his real enemies, who were not in Egypt, but at Paris.

Thus from the very first she worked for him with all the skill of a consummate diplomat, "winning hearts," as he so pithily said; for she charmed all who met her, never offended any one, was devoted to her friends, easily forgave her enemies, and proved so uniformly affable and obliging that every one praised her.

For a time, the French lived in continual expectation of glorious tidings from the East; but when the English



fleet cut off all communication, and month after month passed by without news, rumours of defeat and of Bonaparte's death gradually spread abroad, and those who had been secretly jealous of his former triumphs, began to belittle them. These rumours of death and disaster ultimately reached the Directory, and Josephine, going thither to inquire whether any official news had come from Egypt, once overheard some men remark: "Here comes the wife of that hypocrite, Bonaparte. If he is not dead to Europe, he is at least dead to France!" This remark put her on her guard, and prevented her granting much credence to the vague reports which came to her ears, for she henceforth rightly suspected they had been started by her husband's enemies.

Meantime, Bonaparte was in Egypt, cut off from all news from home, and one day when he was talking of Josephine to Junot, the latter ventured to inform him that his wife was unfaithful, strengthening this assertion by relating the worst gossip current concerning her life in Paris and Italy. Bonaparte, who had always been madly jealous, was beside himself with anger when he heard these tales, and in his rage and excitement swore he would exterminate his wife's admirers, vociferating: "As for her, divorce! yes, divorce, public divorce in the face of all the world!" Indeed, Junot could not calm the storm he had raised, so even the seventeen-year-old Eugene, who served as Bonaparte's aide-de-camp in this campaign, had to listen to angry denunciations of his mother, while the General paced back and forth in his tent. His friends, hoping to help him recover his self-control, suggested that a divorce would only serve to dim his own glory, but he retorted: "My glory! Ah, what would I not give so that what Junot told me might not be true; I love that woman so dearly! If Josephine is



guilty, divorce must separate me from her for ever. I won't be the laughing stock of all the Parisian fops. I am going to write to my brother Joseph to have the divorce pronounced immediately!"

It was fortunate, however, that communications were so difficult, for even the letter in which Bonaparte bitterly reproached Josephine for her supposed infidelity was a long while in reaching her. But although Bonaparte was wounded to the heart by Junot's disclosures, which — strange to relate — he believed without investigation, he could not cease to love Josephine, and showed his affection for her by watching over her son as carefully as if the boy had been his very own, and by shielding him as much as possible from all danger.

Absolutely faithful to Josephine until then, Bonaparte, who had forbidden all licence in his army under penalty of death, now seemed to consider himself freed from all moral restraints, and so freely indulged in immoral excesses, that he actually scandalised his own staff, which was none too strait-laced. He even showed such marked and public attentions to Madame Fourès, the wife of a young officer, that Eugene de Beauharnais, whom duty compelled to attend his general everywhere, finally rebelled. His indignant protest, however, merely recalled Bonaparte to a sense of outer decorum, for he did not immediately end an unsavory connection which caused much scandal at that time.

Not very long after Junot's unfortunate disclosures, Bonaparte, who had been without news from home for many months, suddenly received from Sir Sydney Smith a bundle of French newspapers, showing that during his absence France had not only lost Italy, but that the enemy was even then crossing the Rhine, and his country was in imminent danger. After a night spent in devouring the



news sent by the English, Bonaparte suddenly determined to forsake his present unsuccessful undertaking and return to France, in spite of the English fleet blockading the Egyptian ports.

This sudden resolve was communicated to his stepson in the abrupt announcement: "Eugene, you are going to see your mother again," and the plan thus briefly formulated was immediately carried out.

Leaving Kléber at the head of the Egyptian army, Bonaparte secretly embarked with a few friends, and, cleverly dodging the English vessels, finally landed at Fréjus, bringing the first news of the second battle of Aboukir. The tidings of his return, of the triumph of the French at Aboukir, of Masséna's victory in Switzerland, and of Brune's in Holland, reached Paris simultaneously, so that it is no wonder if the common people felt as if Bonaparte's mere presence brought back France's good luck.

Josephine, who happened to be dining with one of the Directors and his wife, rose from table as soon as the news reached her, and made hasty preparations to go and meet her returning spouse. Aware of the tales told by Junot and the Bonapartes, she was feverishly anxious to gain Bonaparte's ear first, knowing she could dispel his doubts and mitigate his anger, if she could only see him before his family completely poisoned his mind against her. Indeed, she still felt so sure of his deep affection for her, and of her unbounded influence over him, that she warmly cried: "Let me but see him first, and he will throw himself in my arms!"

She therefore set out in hot haste with Hortense, taking the direct road to Lyons, and it was only on arriving there, that she learned that Bonaparte had taken another route, thus reaching Paris only to find her gone. With



a heart full of disappointment and lively apprehension, Josephine now retraced her steps, her mind dwelling continually upon the scenes which had doubtless taken place at home during her absence.

In fact, when Bonaparte reached his house on the 16th of October, 1799, and failed to find Josephine there, his anger rose to positive frenzy. His brothers, who soon came to welcome him, added fuel to his wrath by the tales they told, and worked him up to such a pitch of fury that when Josephine finally arrived, — three days later, — he utterly refused to see her. Kneeling before his closed door, she tearfully implored him to listen, her children joining their voices to hers, until he finally opened the door to inquire coldly and sternly what excuse she could offer for her black perfidy. Some authorities state that the estrangement lasted three days, that Josephine was ordered out of the house, and that this cruel command was rescinded only because she showed such touching grief and submission. However that may be, her tears and explanations ultimately dispelled Bonaparte's doubts, or at least won his forgiveness, for a complete reconciliation took place, and when Lucien called early one morning, he was amazed, upon entering his brother's bedroom, to find Josephine again sharing her husband's couch, and to see the couple evidently on the best of terms once more.

. Some historians claim that Bonaparte, although convinced of Josephine's guilt, forgave her through sheer infatuation; others declare that he took her back merely to avoid the scandal of a divorce, which might then have seriously damaged his political prospects; but most authorities agree in concluding that Josephine gave a satisfactory explanation of her past to the man whom she cleverly helped to attain his ambitious ends. Most of the



gossip concerning her probably arose from the fact that she was so frequently seen in the company of the beautiful Madame Tallien, whom she had met in prison, and to whom she owed the preservation of her life. The fact that Madame Tallien and several other women of her acquaintance had, to express it mildly, very loose ideas concerning love and marriage, cast a slur upon Josephine's fair fame which has never been entirely effaced, although many of the accusations made against her have since been disproved.

Bonaparte, however, showed that he realised the harm such associates must necessarily do her, for as soon as he had risen high enough to be able to dispense with the indirect assistance of these friends, — which was invaluable to him at the beginning of his career, — he bade Josephine cease to receive them, save in the morning and in secret. As Bonaparte and his wife publicly appeared on the best of terms after his return from Egypt, all the scandalous rumours so sedulously spread by the Bonaparte family were effectually silenced, and Josephine's enemies had to renounce all present hope of ousting her from her husband's heart and home.

The reconciliation between Bonaparte and Josephine came none too soon, for he sorely needed her tactful cooperation to carry out his ambitious schemes. From her he learned in detail all that had happened in the inner political circle during his long absence, and finding the time propitious for action — or the "pear ripe," as he graphically expressed it — he prepared to carry out his cherished plan of becoming head of the government, although he then lacked ten years of the age required for the Director's office.

He began operations by parading a fear lest the Directors should make away with him by unlawful means, and



at the civic banquet on the 15th of Brumaire, avoided touching anything save bread and water, ostentatiously brought and served by his own aide-de-camp. In all the private conferences during the fortnight preceding the revolution which brought about the Consulate, Josephine was present. While she took no active part in the political discussions, she was so useful in carrying out many of her husband's plans, that a contemporary writes: "She fully justified Bonaparte's restored confidence."

His plan was to break up the Directory by forcing the resignation of three out of five of the Directors, and to prevent hostile members of the government from getting wind of this intention until it was too late. To secure Gohier, President of the Directory, Josephine wrote his wife a charming note, inviting her and her husband to breakfast at eight o'clock on the 18th of Brumaire. The hour was so unusual that it aroused suspicions, and Madame Gohier came alone. But when Bonaparte showed his displeasure at her husband's absence, and forced her to write to him to urge him to come, she, on the contrary, warned him to keep away, declaring she felt sure the invitation was an ambush.

The moment for action having come, Bonaparte, protected by a strong escort, proceeded to the Council of the Five Hundred, where he haughtily called the government to account, saying: "What have you done with the France which I left so glorious? I left peace, I find war. I left you victories, I find defeats. I left you the millions from Italy, and everywhere I find despoliating laws and poverty. What have you done with the hundred thousand Frenchmen whom I knew, my companions in glory? They are dead. This state of things cannot go on. Before three years were over it would lead us to despotism."

Then, under pretext of upholding liberty, he secured the persons of two of the recalcitrant Directors and — the three others having resigned — proceeded, with the help of his brothers and friends, to establish a new government, the Consulate, in which he would occupy the highest position. Another fatiguing and eventful day still lay before him, for on the morrow he and his adherents went to St. Cloud, whither the Council of the Five Hundred had been transported, to dismiss that assembly.

In the meantime, Josephine, anxiously awaiting developments at home, was pleased and touched when Bonaparte's mother suddenly appeared in her salon to beg for news. The two women fell weeping in each other's arms, and Josephine, who never harboured feelings of resentment, generously and courteously welcomed the woman who was then trembling for the lives of her sons. Napoleon, Lucien, and Joseph were all three engaged in this political upheaval, which was not unlike those which had already caused so much blood to flow in France. The fears of the trembling women were therefore only partly allayed by the brief messages which Bonaparte sent Josephine from time to time, and both were greatly relieved by the safe return of the conquering hero at three o'clock in the morning.

After rapturously embracing Josephine, giving her a graphic sketch of the principal events of the day, during which his life had several times been in danger, Bonaparte dictated an artful proclamation where might paraded as right, and, after a few hours of slumber, awoke, as he had long dreamed, master of Paris and France. His last words, as he lay down to rest beside his wife on the 19th of Brumaire, were the exultant remark: "By the way, to-morrow we sleep in the Luxembourg!"

Bonaparte, First Consul of France, set out, the very



THE MORNING OF THE 18TH BRUMAIRE, NOV. 9, 1799.





next day, with Josephine, in a plain carriage, to take possession of the new abode, where he and his wife were to serve a two months' apprenticeship at holding court. During these two months, many social changes also took place; the Bonapartes, abandoning republican customs, and Josephine being again called Madame instead of Citizeness. The royalists, who knew that Josephine was a monarchist too, and who fancied that Bonaparte would yet restore the King, covered his sword with flowers, and were frequently seen at the receptions at the Luxembourg, and it was partly owing to their countenance, that Bonaparte won so many adherents, and was chosen First Consul by such a large majority when the elections finally took place.

At the Luxembourg, Josephine's apartments, directly above those of the Consul, communicated with them by a small private staircase. This allowed them to be together whenever business did not prevent, for theirs was the sort of marriage where the wife could truthfully be called a helpmate. Josephine, as charming and tactful as ever, received her friends every evening in the Luxembourg, where Bonaparte occasionally appeared in her salon. When he was present, he gave the signal for the breaking up of the party at about ten, by remarking abruptly: "Let 's go to bed." But when he remained in his study, all visitors were dismissed by the brief announcement made by a servant: "Madame, the First Consul has gone to bed."

In company, Bonaparte was as awkward, abrupt, and rude, as Josephine was graceful, smooth, and polite; but when he was interested, his conversation was fascinating in the extreme, as all his contemporaries bear witness. His lack of ease, especially in the presence of women, probably arose from lack of home training and neglected



childhood, and Talleyrand expressed the general opinion, when he once remarked: "It is a great pity that so great a man should be so ill-bred."

It was during his sojourn at the Luxembourg, on the 20th of January, 1800, that Bonaparte gave his sister Caroline in marriage to his friend Murat. His consent was, however, very reluctantly given, for he considered Murat, the son of an inn-keeper, far beneath his family. But Murat's magnificent conduct at the battle of Aboukir, and the fact that such an alliance would please the republican party, finally induced Bonaparte to yield to his sister's wishes.

From the very first, Bonaparte expressed a determination to surround the new government with all the pomp necessary to impress the common people; so he soon decided to inhabit the Tuileries, the palace of the kings. This building, used by the Directors and consuls for business purposes, was now to become the Consular dwelling, and when Bonaparte visited it to give orders for its renovation, he pointed contemptuously at the liberty caps decorating its walls, and abruptly ordered "that rubbish" removed, and the Liberty Tree felled.

Although it had first been decreed that all three consuls should live in the Tuileries, one of them, Cambacérès, expressed great reluctance to move into a palace, "merely to move out again," as he said. A separate abode was, therefore, assigned to him in a pretty mansion close by, a dwelling which he retained throughout the Consulate and Empire. The Third Consul, Lebrun, however, occupied the pavilion where Madame Elizabeth had once lodged, and Bonaparte, being First Consul, appropriated the king's apartments, allotting to Josephine, Marie Antoinette's rooms on the ground floor. Josephine, who still hoped that royalty might



ultimately be restored in France, and who, being a monarchist, considered it almost desecration to occupy the Queen's lodgings, made timid objections, which were ruthlessly set aside by her autocratic husband. As for him, he felt no scruples of any kind, openly rejoiced at the coming change, and playfully awoke his wife on the 18th of February, 1800, with the exultant cry: "Wake up, little créole, wake up! You sleep in the house of your masters to-night. And we will go there with a flourish which will speak to the eyes and the hearts of the people. They like a pompous show!"

But while permitting his wife to see his exultation, Bonaparte carefully concealed it from every one else, seemed cold, silent, and somewhat bored, and remarked regretfully to his secretary, Bourrienne: "You are very lucky, for you have n't got to make a show of yourself. You can go as you please. As for me, I have to go in a procession!"

Josephine, being allowed no share in the coming pageant, drove off quietly to the Tuileries with her daughter, under the secretary's escort, and, comfortably seated in Lebrun's apartment, witnessed the solemn arrival of the three consuls in all the bravery of crimson coats and broad gold lace. The consuls had left the Luxembourg at one, in a state carriage drawn by the six white horses given to Bonaparte at the Treaty of Campo Formio. They were escorted by the government officials in full array, and by a part of the troops, the remainder being drawn up in line along their passage and in front of the Tuileries.

On arriving at the foot of the Grand Staircase, Bonaparte alighted with his companions, and, being the only military consul, immediately sprang upon a magnificently accoutred steed to review the troops,



amid deafening acclamations of "Long live the First Consul!"

Josephine, from Lebrun's windows, witnessed this ovation, and the people, perceiving her, nudged each other, saying: "Do you see Josephine? She has brought him good luck," for the soldiers all shared their General's belief that Josephine was his good angel, and his bright particular "Star."

The military pageant over, Bonaparte ran quickly up the broad steps trodden by so many kings, and, entering the apartments of Louis XVI., which were henceforth to be known as his, graciously received the congratulations of his friends. But although he had now reached one cherished goal, he was not at all blind to the perils of his position, for he remarked to his secretary the very next day: "Getting into the Tuileries is n't everything; the thing is to stay here. Who is n't there who has n't lived in this palace? Thieves and members of the National Convention." Then, pointing out the house whence he had witnessed the siege of the Tuileries on the 10th of August, 1792, he grimly vowed the people would have a harder time ousting him than good Louis XVI.

As in the Luxembourg, Bonaparte's apartments in the Tuileries communicated with those of Josephine by a private staircase, and here, too, they were often together and could see each other at any moment. Their reception rooms were, however, quite separate, and the society they received differed in many points; for while Bonaparte entertained statesmen, officers, and staunch republicans, Josephine received the old aristocracy of the Faubourg St. Germain, which crowded around her more than ever, hoping, through her, to influence Bonaparte to effect a Bourbon restoration.



Josephine

A few days after her arrival in the Tuileries, Josephine held her first official reception there for twelve foreign ambassadors and many other great state officials. While there were as yet no chamberlains, the Tuileries had already many of the aspects of a court, and Josephine, although still addressed as Madame Bonaparte, now held levées just like a queen. At this first official reception, she won golden opinions by the charming grace with which she did the honours, by her lack of all assumption, and by her pleasing appearance. No one would have guessed that the graceful woman, clad in plain white muslin, with a string of pearls around her neck, was more than six years older than her husband, who seldom donned his consular costume, but preferred the simple uniform which was so much more becoming to him than any other garb.

While Bonaparte was giving audiences to officials and diligently attending to business, Josephine entertained her friends, giving charming breakfasts to about a dozen ladies almost every day. But while Bonaparte encouraged her to entertain as much as possible, he would no longer allow her to receive those among her former friends whose past could not bear the closest scrutiny. For however lax in morals himself, Bonaparte was very desirous that his court should contrast favourably with those of the kings, and be, at least outwardly, moral and decorous. Even Madame Tallien, who had saved Josephine's life, could never obtain admission to the Tuileries, and Josephine, forced to refuse her this favour, wrote to her a touching letter which proved that she never forgot past benefits and was not, like her husband, essentially ungrateful towards most of those who had been kind to her when poor.

Although the First Consul and his wife often dined



in private together, they gave state dinners once a week in the gallery of Diana, inviting about two hundred guests to each of these great banquets. Bonaparte, who ate very fast, — sometimes even using his fingers instead of knife or fork, with utter disregard of the most elementary table manners, — could seldom be induced to linger more than twenty minutes at table. The result was, that his guests, knowing they would not be given time to satisfy their appetites, learned in time to take the necessary precaution of dining at home in advance when invited to the Tuileries.

Besides state dinners, balls, and receptions, Bonaparte gratified the popular love of display by periodical reviews, distributions of prizes, processions, etc. The people, in those days, fancied him a favourite of the gods, for he seemed able to control even the elements, and, "if it happened to rain or the day was cloudy, it often came to pass that at the moment Bonaparte appeared, the clouds broke and the sun shone out." This fact greatly impressed the common people, who, therefore, cheered him all the more enthusiastically.

Meantime a great reaction had taken place in fashionable circles. The return of many of the émigrés, the consequent reopening of their salons, and the renewal of the opera balls — closed for the past ten years — had given a new impetus to trade, by supplying work for all those who live upon the pleasures of the rich. Josephine, the acknowledged leader in all matters of society and fashion, was treated like a queen, and greeted as such wherever she appeared by the rising of all the ladies present. Her taste was exquisite, and much of her time, thought, and money was devoted to the all important feminine question "dress."

The returning émigrés, who crowded into her salon,



and yet were somewhat ashamed of being seen in a republican court, declared they showed her marked attentions, not only in hopes of winning favours for themselves and friends, but especially with a view of furthering the cause of their King. She was so gracious to them all, and so anxious that Bonaparte should recall the Bourbons, that the royalists were greatly encouraged, and Madame de Guiche was sent over to feel her way; she informed Josephine that her husband's services, if Louis XVIII. were restored, would be recognised by the title of Connétable of France, and that grateful royalists would erect a monument on which he would be represented crowning his King.

Bonaparte, who was secretly pleased to see his wife attract so many of the aristocrats to the Tuileries, was not, however, to be caught by such a bait, especially as he had already determined to be head of the state himself. When Josephine, therefore, reported this offer to him, he drily remarked: "And did you tell her that this monument would have as pedestal the corpse of the First Consul?" for he fully realised that the people did not then want and would not allow any Bourbon to rule over them. But Josephine and Hortense would not give up hope, and so often implored him in behalf of the royal dynasty that he once said to his secretary: —

"These women belong entirely to the devil! They are mad for royalty. The Faubourg St. Germain has turned their heads; they are made the protecting genii of the royalists; still they do not trouble me, and I am not displeased with them."

When the secretary, shortly after this, ventured to hint to Josephine that she might interfere with her husband's policy if she gave too much encouragement to the royalists, she remarked: —



"I wish I could persuade him to recall the King, lest he himself may have the idea of becoming such; for the fear that he may do this always awakens in me a foreboding of evil which I cannot banish from my mind."

It was while dreading lest her husband might wish to become king, that Josephine began also to be haunted by the fear that if he assumed the crown he would divorce her, to secure by a new marriage an heir to his throne. This dread embittered her life, off and on, for several years before the divorce she had foreseen actually took place.

Throughout the winter and spring of 1800, Bonaparte was very busy legislating for his new government, gathering the power more and more into his own hands, and preparing for a new campaign in Italy. To blind the English and Austrians, he publicly announced that he was going to Dijon and perhaps to Geneva; but Josephine was quite aware of his secret intentions when he left her at three o'clock in the morning on the 6th of May, saying: "Courage, my good Josephine! I shall not forget thee, nor will my absence be long."

With incredible speed for those times, he crossed France, sent armies over the Simplon and Mt. Cenis, and crossing the St. Bernard himself with the remainder of his men, hemmed the Austrian army in between his own forces and the French troops stationed along the frontier and at Genoa. The Austrians, brought to bay at Marengo, where it seemed at first as if they would frustrate all Bonaparte's plans, finally saw the tide of battle turn entirely against them. Bonaparte here won so glorious a victory, that in this one encounter he recovered all the ground lost in Italy during his absence, and could return home triumphant after a campaign which had lasted only forty days.





Josephine

When the people heard that he had arrived at the Tuileries in the night of July 3rd, they assembled beneath his windows and greeted him with such deafening acclamations, that his heart filled with pride and he rapturously exclaimed to his secretary: "Do you hear the cheers of the people which have not yet ceased? It is as sweet to me as the sound of Josephine's voice."

On the 14th, when the Consular Guard returned, a grand fête was held at the Tuileries, Invalides, and Champ de Mars, and as Eugene also received a share of the honours awarded, this proved a doubly happy day for Josephine, who was present at the grand review. The ovation given to the First Consul on this occasion even surpassed the one he received on his return from Italy; but although it seemed as if he must have reached the height of his ambition, he was not satisfied, for he ruefully cried: "If I were to die to-morrow, after ten centuries I would not fill half a page in universal history!"

Bonaparte, who had never been modest, and who delighted in flattery, however fulsome, was, however, greatly pleased when in answer to his question: "Well, gentlemen, have you done much work since I went away?" the obsequious Senate promptly replied: "Not as much as you, General." Josephine, too, was unstinted in her meed of praise, and as he now felt sure of his hold upon her affections, and had quite ceased to be jealous, these were happy times for them both. Bonaparte was indulgent and generous to Josephine, who on her part was so submissive and devoted, that the marriage was considered unusually harmonious, as well as a case of true love on both sides.

Together, the Consul and his wife attended the gala performance at the Théâtre Français, and when all the



fêtes were ended, set out for Malmaison, which, in the meantime, had been newly decorated and furnished with great taste. Here they passed the summer, Bonaparte spending several days a week in town to despatch his business, and Josephine always parting from him regretfully, to welcome him on his return with rapture. The presence of Hortense, of her companions, of Bonaparte's pretty sisters, and of his handsome young aides-de-camp, made the house very lively, and Josephine and the First Consul merrily joined in the games and dances on the lawn. Bonaparte's favourite amusement was, however, "prisoner's base," which he played with great enthusiasm, but where he was singularly awkward and unfortunate. Often tripping and falling when closely pursued, he was frequently captured by the enemy. But while he bore his own mishaps and imprisonment with great good humour, he could not endure to see Josephine caught, and kept clapping excitedly for a rescue until she was released.

He also delighted in walking with her around her domain, which was gradually enlarged, until it became a fine country place with extensive pleasure grounds. These were laid out with great taste and skill, Bonaparte and Josephine planting certain trees themselves, and the latter taking a particular interest in her flower-beds and hot-houses. These were enriched by gifts from abroad; for, knowing Josephine's fancy for rare plants and animals, her friends and her husband's admirers vied with each other in procuring new specimens for her collections. Josephine's gardeners also made sundry experiments under her directions, which led to great results, and it is said she introduced the camellia in France.

In those days, Josephine was very near her husband in heart, mind, and person, watching him so closely that he once said: "Not one of my thoughts, not one of my

actions escaped Josephine; she followed, grasped, guessed everything, — a fact which sometimes inconvenienced me in my occupations." This close communion with the man whom she now loved with all the depth of which she was capable, made Josephine very happy, as is evinced by a letter to her mother wherein she says: "You ought to love Bonaparte; he makes your daughter very happy; he is kind, amiable, in a word, a charming man."

But although perfectly happy while Bonaparte was with her, Josephine was anxious and unhappy whenever he was away; for she knew he had many enemies, and was in continual fear for his life. Besides the disappointed republicans, the royalists, who, ever since the last Italian campaign, had relinquished their long cherished hope of Bonaparte's restoring the power to the Bourbons, were now his deadly foes, and both parties alike plotted to kill him.

Hearing of assassins and conspiracies, Josephine, timid by nature, grew very apprehensive, and therefore particularly objected to the long drives to and from Paris. Her fears were not without foundation, as was fully demonstrated by sundry royalist attempts to murder the First Consul, which were checked by the watchful police. Then came the fatal explosion in December, 1800.

It seems that the First Consul — contrary to his usual custom — had announced that he and his family would attend a grand performance of Hayden's "Creation." But, exhausted by the mental exertions of the day, Bonaparte sank into an easy-chair after dinner, and fell into a deep sleep, from which he was roused with difficulty when the moment came to set out. He, therefore, stumbled sleepily off to his carriage, leaving Josephine, Hortense, and his sister to follow with General Rapp.

Josephine, in honour of the occasion, wore for the first



time a magnificent cashmere shawl, just sent her from Constantinople. She was about to follow her husband, when Rapp suddenly remarked: "Let me make a suggestion, madame; you have not put on your shawl as becomingly as usual."

Josephine, smiling indulgently, bade her escort kindly arrange the folds to suit his fancy, and patiently allowed him to redrape it, until Madame Murat exclaimed that they would be late, for she had heard her brother drive off. In this way, it happened that Bonaparte was slightly ahead of his party. As he drove through one of the narrow streets leading to the opera house, there was a sudden fearful explosion of an infernal machine placed there on purpose to kill him; but, as it went off a second too late, his carriage remained unharmed. Many people near there, however, were instantly killed, and others sorely wounded. But the carriage containing Josephine and her friends, which should have been directly behind the First Consul's, was fortunately too far away to suffer serious damage, although a splinter from the shattered windows slightly cut Hortense's cheek.

Bonaparte, with his usual great presence of mind, immediately bade his coachman drive on, and on reaching the opera went right into the hall, where the performance had already begun, and where the noise of the explosion had been mistaken for a salvo of artillery. But, although apparently unmoved, the First Consul was very anxious about his wife, for he hastily despatched an aide-de-camp to see if she were safe. This man reached the scene of the accident just in time to assure the fainting Josephine of her husband's safety, and then hurried her on to the opera, where Rapp appeared first at the door of the consular box. Bonaparte, seeing him,

breathlessly whispered: "Josephine," but at the same moment his anxious glance rested upon his wife, who, although pale and trembling, was quite unharmed.

The audience, learning a few moments later of the First Consul's narrow escape, stopped the performance to give him an enthusiastic ovation. Deafening cheers also accompanied Bonaparte all the way home, where the principal officials were awaiting his arrival to present their congratulations. This impromptu reception over, Josephine, still pale and trembling, cast herself into her husband's arms, tearfully crying: "What a life when I must be ever trembling for you!"

Seeing her tears, Bonaparte gave full vent to his wrath at the negligence of the police, which had entailed the death of many persons. But while he breathed anger and revenge, Josephine secretly wrote to the chief-of-police, begging him to seize and punish only the instigators of the crime, and to permit all their tools and accomplices to escape unmolested. She also visited the wounded to see that her orders concerning them were faithfully carried out, and that they had every care, for she was ever gentle, compassionate, and very kind to the poor.

This conspiracy served to consolidate the very power the royalists sought to destroy, and again raised the question which so sorely troubled Josephine, — namely, who would succeed the man who had rendered such brilliant services to his country, since he had no child?

Early in 1801, Bonaparte signed the treaty of Lunéville, which left France with no real foe save England, and which proved the beginning of four years of peace for France. After this treaty, many of the still absent émigrés returned, old customs crept in once more, and the Republican day of rest, occurring every ten days, again made way for the time-honoured Sunday. During



that same year Bonaparte's birthday was officially celebrated for the first time by the French nation, on August 15th, and in memory of the recently established peace, the bloody Place de la Révolution was officially transformed into the Place de la Concorde, by which name it is still known to-day. Bonaparte, who subsequently declared: "I really thought that the fate of France, of Europe, and my own were settled, and that there would be no more wars," now devoted all his energies to matters of government and education, completing, with the help of learned French jurists, the famous Code which still bears his name.

Meanwhile, Josephine was in her element, for the many entertainments given, were so many excuses for the purchase of the new gowns and jewels in which her heart delighted. But, while she spent enormous sums for her toilet, she was also generous to a fault, and supported many needy aristocrats. She also often interceded in their behalf with the First Consul, who, at her request, restored the confiscated property to the widow of the Duke of Orleans, and to many others. Noted foreigners again came to Paris as of old, and Josephine felt particularly flattered by a visit from the Infant of Parma, who solemnly paid his respects to her, although, seven years before, his aunt, Marie Antoinette, had been beheaded on the square which he could see from the palace windows. He was not her only royal guest, however, for the visit of the King and Queen of Etruria soon followed, in whose honour there were many festivities.

That winter, Madame de Staël intrigued incessantly to obtain admission to the Tuileries, where she still hoped to win the favour of the First Consul, and obtain through him the repayment of the million francs which



her father had loaned the King. This claim, however, was rejected on the plea that the Republic paid no debts contracted by the King. This refusal, together with Bonaparte's failure to meet Madame de Staël's advances or appreciate her talents, so enraged the vindictive woman, that she became his inveterate foe, and spoke so freely against him that he finally exiled her.

The summer months, spent at Malmaison in the usual way, were particularly happy for Josephine, because in July, 1801, the First Consul made a Concordat, or treaty, with Pope Pius VII., whereby the Roman Catholic religion was to be officially restored in France the next summer. The amusements at Malmaison now included, besides the usual dances and games, amateur theatricals, in which Hortense and Bonaparte's secretary proved the best actors. A small theatre was built for these performances, in which Bonaparte and Josephine took the liveliest interest, although neither of them formed part of the amateur troop, which consisted mainly of the younger members of the Consular household.

But, in spite of all these causes for happiness, Josephine still mourned the fact that she had no child by her second husband, and, hoping to conciliate the Bonaparte family, still inimical to her in spite of her uniform kindness, she began to plan a marriage between her daughter, Hortense and Bonaparte's favourite brother, Louis. She fancied that such an alliance would not only silence for ever the slanderous tongues of some of Bonaparte's detractors, who accused him of improper intimacy with his step-daughter, but that her husband would take such an interest in the offspring of Hortense and Louis — whom he treated like his children — that he would in time entirely forget he had no son of his own.

Josephine, therefore, regardless of the fact that both



parties had other attachments, and that they had no tastes in common, persuaded Bonaparte that this alliance was most desirable, and thus ultimately brought about a marriage which was to blast two young lives, and cause her, too, bitter sorrow. The young people, seeing no hopes of being united to those they loved, listlessly consented, and after a civil marriage at the Tuileries, received the nuptial benediction in their future home, rue Victoire. Bonaparte insisted that Murat and Caroline — who had been obliged to forego a religious ceremony when married at the Luxembourg — should now receive a blessing too; but when Josephine begged that she might share it also, he peremptorily refused. That may have been, as some people claim, because he deemed it impolitic to let the public know that his marriage had hitherto lacked religious sanction, or he may have already foreseen his divorce, and have realised that merely legal bonds would be more easily broken than those imposed by the Church.

Hortense's marriage over, Bonaparte and Josephine journeyed to Lyons, where a grand ovation awaited them, and on their return attended the housewarming ball of the Governor of Paris, Junot, Duke of Abrantès. While Bonaparte showed his interest by inspecting the house from garret to cellar, Josephine, clad in silver-striped robes, and crowned with dark-hued grapes, won golden opinions as usual for her graceful tact. She also rejoiced in the sensation she created; for she was so tastefully arrayed, and had so cleverly managed to disguise the ravages of time, that she appeared little older than her daughter, although the latter was a bride and barely twenty.

The Consular court removed to Malmaison very early that spring, and it was there that Josephine one morning

received a shabby petitioner, who claimed to have taught the First Consul to write at Brienne. Bonaparte, who was present, and who often made fun of his almost illegible caligraphy, now abruptly exclaimed: "And a fine penman you made of me. Just ask my wife!"

But Josephine, seeing the poor man embarrassed by this unexpected sally, merely smiled and said: "I assure you, sir, that his letters are perfectly charming." The kindly tact which thus set the poor man at ease, and the graceful compliment to which he was far from insensible, so charmed Bonaparte, that he granted the old man a pension for life.

It was thus that Josephine was ever ready to give a happy turn to her husband's remarks, and her graceful tact often won for him friends whom his total lack of amenity would otherwise have repelled. But whereas Josephine was ready to help Bonaparte, she also dreaded his ambition, and although she had ceased to plead with him not to become king, she truthfully declared: "To be the wife of the First Consul fulfils my highest ambition; let me remain so."

It was as First Consul that Bonaparte effected the peace of Amiens in 1802, and when Fox afterwards came to Paris, he was duly invited to Malmaison. There, Josephine did the honours so acceptably, that she completely bewitched the English statesman, who, learning of her love for flowers, thereafter sent her many rare specimens, in spite of the fact that war soon broke out again between the rival countries.

The Senate, wishing to reward Bonaparte for concluding peace with England, now suggested that he should be Consul for life, having power to choose his own successor. Josephine viewed these new honours with terror, and also reluctantly saw him accept St.



Cloud as a country residence. She loved Malmaison best of all her dwellings, for friends could be received there informally, and she clearly perceived that her husband's real enemies were the men who flattered him, filling his head with ideas of divorce and remarriage for the sake of founding a new dynasty. Besides, new dignities entailed new duties, and Josephine, who had hitherto entertained like any other lady, soon after found herself at the head of a semi-regal "household," where four ladies helped her receive her guests.

While waiting for the elections to confirm her husband's new title, Josephine journeyed to Plombières for her health, leaving Hortense to preside over the establishment at Malmaison. The letters which Bonaparte wrote to Josephine during this separation, offer a strange contrast to those written in Italy, although he still showed a gratifying interest in all that concerned her, assuring her that her return would "give great pleasure to her friend, who was lonely without her."

But, although he claimed to be lonely, he managed to amuse himself during her absence by paying rather awkward attentions to young Madame d'Abrantès, among others. One of his eccentric performances was to enter her bedroom every morning at five, seat himself by her bedside, beguile an hour in conversation or reading despatches, and then leave her after playfully pinching her feet through the blankets. Remonstrances and locked doors proving equally unavailing against Bonaparte's passkey and compromising attentions, Madame d'Abrantès boldly resorted to stratagem. She induced her husband to disobey orders and spend the night with her at Malmaison, instead of returning to Paris as usual. On entering the room early the next morning, Bonaparte

was nonplussed to find Junot, and to hear his amazed: "Goodness, General, what are *you* doing in our wives' rooms so early in the morning?"

After muttering a few unintelligible words about waking guests betimes for the hunt, Bonaparte suddenly turned the tables upon Junot, by sternly demanding how he dared thus desert his post? But as he immediately added that his old comrade was forgiven, and must remain to share the day's amusements, the warm-hearted young fellow forgot everything except his General's kind oversight of a breach of discipline. Madame d'Abrantès, however, was not so easily gulled, for she contrived, henceforth, never to spend a night at Malmaison without the protection of her husband's presence.

As we have already seen, Bonaparte had concluded a treaty with the Pope, whereby he agreed to restore the Catholic religion in France. On the day appointed for the execution of this "Concordat," Bonaparte went in state to Notre Dame, where a solemn Mass was celebrated in the presence of all the officials. Although the First Consul never pretended to be devout, he gave so edifying an example of decorum on this occasion that no lack of reverence was ever after shown in church by even the greatest unbeliever. Josephine, who delighted in all the outward practices of religion, without being really devout, was too happy for words as she sat up in the rood-loft, surrounded by a bevy of ladies, all vying in the freshness and elegance of their gowns. Although most of her attendants were noted for their youth and beauty, Josephine was so tastefully arrayed for this ceremony, that she appeared to advantage among them, and at a distance, no one would have dreamed that she could be more than twenty-five years of age.

One month after this imposing ceremony at Notre

Dame, Bonaparte's birthday was again celebrated with great pomp, a blazing star shining above Notre Dame during the grand illumination, as a delicate compliment to his superstitious belief in such an orb. The celebrations extended all over the country, and the Parisians went out to St. Cloud in throngs, to behold the superb play of the waters in the park fountains.

Toward the end of October, 1802, Josephine and her husband left Paris to visit the public buildings, hospitals, and manufactories in the western provinces, and give a new impetus to trade by showing a lively interest in the various industries. Josephine ably seconded the Consul in this laudable purpose, and was delighted to receive choice samples of the workmen's skill, which she acknowledged so gracefully that she invariably charmed the donors.

Although Bonaparte was almost adored in France at that time, he was virulently hated in England, where, knowing that he was lacking in truth and moral principles, he was openly charged with heinous crimes of which he was innocent. The English thus started one slander, which although unfounded, blasted the life of poor Hortense, and caused Josephine many a tear. According to this vile report, the First Consul was improperly intimate with his step-daughter, and had married her to his brother merely so as to adopt his own child, which was said to have come into the world shortly after the wedding. To refute this rumour, which was entirely false, and which, fortunately, had not yet reached Hortense's ears, Napoleon insisted upon her dancing at a large ball, where her appearance bore ample witness to her condition. Besides, the newspapers commented upon it; and about ten months after her marriage, announced the birth of her first child, who was named Napo-



JOSEPHINE.
Gérard.





leon Charles, after his illustrious uncle and his paternal grandfather.

When Josephine finally informed her daughter of the slanderous rumours connected with her name, Hortense fainted with horror, and being already very unhappy with an uncongenial husband, sank into a state of despondency which she never entirely shook off. But while Josephine and her daughter were cut to the heart by this base calumny, Napoleon, strange to relate, felt rather flattered by it, telling Josephine that it was only another proof of the general desire that he should be succeeded by a son who would inherit his talents as well as his name and fame.

Josephine, who no longer cherished any hope of offspring from her second marriage, now began to hope that her grandson might some day rule over France, for Napoleon, who was very fond of children, showed great interest in his little nephew, dandling him with unusual skill, playing with him as soon as he was old enough to take notice, watching over every phase of his development, and rapturously declaring that his brother's son resembled him most in character and appearance. Josephine, however, equally delighted with her first grandchild, fondly averred that the boy was the exact image of his mother at the same age, and tried to have him with her as much as possible.

The winter of 1802–3, which saw Josephine's new interest in her grandchild, was busy and happy too. To encourage commerce, Napoleon bade his wife entertain as much as possible, thus setting an example to all those whose means permitted display. Josephine, who delighted in dress as much as ever, although her charms were somewhat dimmed, was only too glad of any pretext for devising new costumes, upon which she



spent much time, and no less than a million francs per year. Her budget of expenses, which is not without interest, included in one year three thousand francs' worth of rouge. She paid her hairdresser a salary of six thousand francs, and ordered in one year two hundred white muslin dresses, costing from five hundred to two thousand francs apiece, five hundred and fifty-eight pairs of white silk stockings, five hundred and twenty pairs of dainty shoes, five hundred lace-trimmed chemises at three hundred francs each, two hundred and fifty-two hats, and, after shawls came into fashion, no less than sixty, which cost from eight to ten thousand francs apiece. Strange to relate, however, her wardrobe included but two flannel petticoats, and two pairs of tights for riding. Warmth was supplied by cloth or velvet gowns, which, as they were low-necked and short-sleeved, were often supplemented by redingotes lined with fur or silk. The fit of gowns in her day precluded the use of many underclothes, and, aside from a chemise and corset, Josephine wore nothing but a slip, even when her upper garment was one of her favourite white muslins. The shoes and slippers, made to match her gowns, were for ornament more than use, for it is said that when she once showed her shoemaker some footgear which revealed holes after one day's wear, he gravely examined them, and justified himself by exclaiming: "Ah! I see what it is. Madame must have walked in them!" Josephine also delighted in dainty wrappers, nightgowns, and caps, and her husband once declared that her night toilet was as elegant as that used by day, and that she was graceful even in bed.

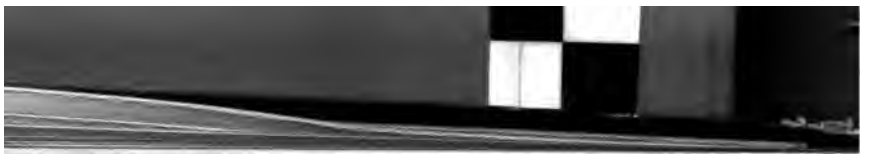
But while Josephine was extravagant in her tastes, and could never refuse to purchase any article of jewelry or dress which happened to strike her fancy,



she also gave lavishly to all who asked, or to whom she thought a gift might afford gratification. The result of this extravagance and generosity was a continual state of indebtedness, and although her allowance was large, her husband was frequently obliged to supplement it by paying her bills. Whenever, therefore, he saw her with reddened eyes, or embarrassed demeanour, refusing to confess the cause of her grief, he suspected financial difficulties, and, after storming and scolding awhile, paid her debts, and, touched by her tears, always ended by saying: "Come, Josephine, come, my darling, don't weep, be comforted."

As no one could surpass Josephine in taste in dress, she generally managed to please her husband's fastidious eye; but she so accustomed him to the use of cosmetics, that he deemed them an indispensable adjunct to a lady's toilet, and bluntly informed the ladies who appeared at the Tuileries, St. Cloud, or Malmaison with unpainted faces: "You have forgotten your rouge!" Many of his biographers declare that he never addressed "a gracious or even a polite phrase to a woman," a lack of social amenity due to his lack of good breeding, to a species of timidity which he never acknowledged, and especially to his vanity, for he had long ago determined that no woman should ever have any influence at his court.

In speaking to ladies, Napoleon not only criticised their looks and apparel in the bluntest way, but was in the habit of asking delicate questions concerning the number and care of their children, speaking so loud that every one could hear, and using terms unsuited to ears polite. It therefore often required all Josephine's tact to smooth down the feathers he had ruthlessly ruffled, for ladies were often seen, even after the briefest con-



versation with Napoleon, on the verge of an outbreak of hysterical tears. Still, such was the fascination this popular hero exercised, that most women courted his attention, and a few strove to win his favour and occupy the position of court favourite. But Napoleon fully realised that times had so changed that open immorality would only damage his prospects, and although he had not sufficient principle to refrain from sin, he made an effort to preserve outward decorum.

Since his marriage, Napoleon had changed from a poor, puny, homely, and comparatively unknown officer, to an apparently healthful and undeniably handsome man of unequalled fame and fortune. But whereas, in 1796, he was desperately in love with his wife, who then seemed his superior in fortune, rank, and beauty, her attractions had so greatly paled that his passion had waned, while her affection increased to such an extent that she now used every device to retain her hold upon him. Her conduct, once questionable, was now above reproach, and the Bonapartes, who still dreaded her influence, and feared lest she might yet induce her husband to adopt Eugene de Beauharnais as his successor, openly regretted that they could find no fault with her save the barrenness for which she could not be blamed.

Napoleon, entirely forgetting the pangs he had suffered from jealousy, now inflicted all its tortures upon poor Josephine; for while he carefully concealed his delinquencies from the public, he often confided them to his wife. Although generally good-tempered and kind, he was cruel in the extreme when under the spell of one of his brief passions, and, when she remonstrated, brutally declared: "You must submit to anything I please, and consider it a matter of course that I should

allow myself such indulgences. I have the right to object to all your complaints by an everlasting I. I am a being apart, and the laws of morality and propriety do not concern me."

Such fallacious reasoning gives the measure of the moral man. But when these passing fancies were over, he invariably came back to Josephine, expecting full forgiveness, and required at all times the most unbounded devotion on her part. Josephine, ever ready to drop everything to please him, often read aloud to him for hours, because he preferred her voice to any other. Owing to his habit of rapid eating, — he seldom spent more than fifteen minutes at table, — and perchance to the first stages of the stomach-cancer from which he died, Napoleon was subject to violent spasms of indigestion, often followed by nausea. In such attacks he threw himself on the floor, writhed and groaned extravagantly, — not having learned as yet to bear pain with fortitude, — and called for Josephine, who had to pet and nurse him like a baby. It was these spasms of indigestion, or rather his lack of self-control when a prey to them, that gave rise to the false rumour that Napoleon was subject to epileptic fits. When ill, or idle, Josephine was his favourite companion; for although she was not the intellectual paragon her enthusiastic admirers describe, she was eminently sympathetic, and rarely combated her husband's views. In spite of her naturally shallow and frivolous disposition, she was so receptive, and had met so many interesting people who talked freely to her, that she was quite well informed. Besides she was blessed with an innate fund of common-sense, which prevented her being blinded by the exalted position which she attained.

The claims of dress and society, however, left her



little time for the cultivation of her mind, and aside from what she read to her husband, Josephine seldom opened a book. When she did, it was some novel borrowed from her attendants and read surreptitiously; for she knew Napoleon abominated fiction and ruthlessly cast it into the fire whenever he saw it. Thus, almost deprived of the only kind of literature she might have enjoyed, Josephine had recourse to the gossip of the day, which was diligently poured into her ears, and which she privately retailed to Napoleon, who used her — as well as others — as a species of social detective. The information thus obtained, he maliciously used as a kind of mental thumbscrew, gloating over the helpless wrath of the victims when they found their most cherished secrets known to Napoleon. They were all the more dismayed because he generally used information of an unsavoury character as a means of torment, and they well knew that while he claimed plenty of latitude and deemed himself above all moral laws, he would tolerate no open scandal at his court, nor receive people whose reputation was tainted. In fact, the etiquette around him and his wife daily grew more rigid, and after the formal restoration of religion, the First Consul required all his household to attend daily Mass in the castle chapel.

Even when untrue to his wife, Napoleon carefully treated her with every mark of respect in public, dining and driving with her daily. But these drives were not always enjoyable, for he was often cross or wilful, and once insisted upon driving, in spite of his notorious lack of skill with horses, until there was a runaway, and he and Josephine were nearly killed.

Although Napoleon and Josephine had separate apartments at the Tuileries and at St. Cloud, they generally



slept in the same room, for Josephine had persuaded her husband that he was safest in her company, because she slept so lightly that she would be sure to hear and warn him of any nocturnal attempt against his life. In spite of this vaunted wakefulness, however, Josephine slept so soundly the first night at St. Cloud, that she was amazed to discover on the morrow that her new drawing-room had caught fire during the night, and that the conflagration had been discovered and extinguished without her knowledge.

When not too busy, Napoleon often strolled into his wife's room during the day, and when she was dressing, he tumbled over her things, ruthlessly destroyed any article of apparel which did not suit his fancy, inquired into prices of materials, pulled her hair, playfully slapped and pinched her bare arms and shoulders, and behaved, in short, more like a teasing boy than like the chief of a great nation. Josephine generally bore these visits with her usual gentle nonchalance, but when he hurt her too badly with his rough caresses, she would drawl impatiently : " Stop, Bonaparte, do stop ! "

He was in her dressing-room, presiding over her toilet, while he lay on the floor playing with Hortense's baby, when the diplomatic corps came to see him on the 14th of March, 1803. Rising leisurely, he went into the great hall to receive the dignitaries. Although he had been in the sunniest mood a few moments before, he now suddenly stepped up to the British ambassador, and so rudely denounced England's failure to execute the treaty of Amiens, that, as he intended, war soon ensued. The declaration was no sooner made than he determined to inspect the armament at Antwerp, and deeming it advisable to produce a favourable impression wherever he went, bade Josephine prepare to accompany



him with all her household, and take part in the semi-regal progress he planned. Not only were new dresses and jewels purchased for this occasion, but Napoleon procured from the Senate the crown jewels, which had last been worn by Marie Antoinette, and had never decked any save queens of France.

The Consular party left St. Cloud on the 24th of June, 1803, and two days later reached Amiens, where, as Napoleon had foreseen, the priests had influenced the people to receive them like the kings of old, even offering them the traditional gift of four white swans, which were sent to grace the Tuileries basin. From Amiens, Napoleon and Josephine proceeded to Boulogne, Dunkirk, and Lille, where throngs of people awaited their coming, and where so many balls and receptions were held in their honour, that Josephine wrote to her daughter that all her time was spent "receiving compliments." This was, however, only a beginning; for they passed on into Belgium, — then a part of France, — and were received with lively demonstrations of joy at Ostende, Bruges, and Ghent. In the latter city the Prefect of the Department made the following flowery address to Josephine, which is only a sample of the adulation which was offered to her at every stage in this memorable journey: "You — whose tender affection is to the First Consul's happiness what the admiration of his century is to his glory — deign to accept our homage. We well know here, madame, what a power you wield over all hearts by your benevolence. When accompanied by irresistible charm, by all the graces of mind and talent, this virtue is all powerful. Therefore, madame, deign to believe that all here are subject to your will."

In fact, Napoleon and Josephine were welcomed



everywhere as if they were divinities, and, as they devoutly attended Mass as often as possible, they won golden opinions from all the clergy, who, anxious to show their gratitude to the First Consul for restoring their worship, taught the people to love and honour him and his wife. But poor Josephine received an unintentional stab at their hands at Mechlin, where the archbishop, in his welcoming address, mentioned "the sacred bond" uniting her and her husband, which unfortunately did not exist, and whose omission she regretted more and more as time went on. Notwithstanding her secret mortification, she acknowledged his compliments in her usual graceful way, playing her part as well as any of the queens who had preceded her.

Josephine received, however, the greatest and most pleasing ovation at Brussels, where the people, knowing her love for flowers, showered choice blossoms down upon her as she slowly entered the city in the new carriage they had just given her. Military pageants, triumphal arches, illuminations, balls, and receptions formed only a part of the festivities in her honour, and on Sunday she was solemnly escorted to St. Gudule's, where she sat in the gallery, while her husband monopolised the official honours preceding the grand midday Mass.

Thus eighty towns were visited in forty-eight days, the Consular party returning to St. Cloud in time for the official celebration of Napoleon's birthday, which was kept as usual. Napoleon's court was very brilliant in those days, and his sisters were often seen there. One of these, Pauline, lost her husband in the West Indies, but the brief court mourning was scarcely over, when her re-marriage became imminent, for she made a conquest of the Italian Prince Borghese, and thus had the satisfaction of being the first in her family



to bear the title of princess. Her first appearance at court in her new rôle was in November, and the ladies, not wishing to be eclipsed by the new princess, all donned their most becoming gowns. Josephine, however, had put on a simple white robe which made her appear so young and charming that Napoleon exclaimed: "Ah! Josephine, I shall be jealous; you are planning mischief. Why are you so beautiful to-day?"

Delighted with the compliment which vividly recalled the happy time when he had eyes for her alone, Josephine answered: "I know that you like to see me in white, and so I put on a white gown. That is all."

"Well, if you did it to please me, you have succeeded," answered Napoleon, gallantly kissing her round shoulder, despite the spectators present, and leading her to the mirror so she could see how well she looked. This simple toilet equally pleased the new princess, who appeared in a green velvet gown fairly covered with the famous Borghese jewels; but her stay in the Tuileries was nevertheless very short, for when she discovered that her dress was not in harmony with the blue furniture in the room, she refused to sit down, even for a moment, and soon took her leave.

Pauline, like the rest of the Bonapartes, disliked Josephine, who, despite their rudeness, was always kind, and often interceded in their behalf when their brother was displeased with their conduct, which was often open to censure. But Josephine was kind to every one, and was never weary of trying to conciliate everybody. Her utmost efforts, however, failed not only where the Bonapartes were concerned, but also with the Moreaus.

General Moreau had helped Bonaparte to become First Consul, expecting to secure that title in his turn;

but his hopes were blasted when the people named Bonaparte Consul for life, with the privilege of appointing his successor. Urged on by his wife, who envied Josephine's exalted position, Moreau then joined a conspiracy formed by Pichegru, Cadoudal, Polignac and others, to effect a counter-revolution, and restore royalty in France. Thanks to Napoleon's police system, this plot was discovered in time; but while Pichegru and Cadoudal were executed, Moreau was banished to America, whence he returned only to bear arms against his former comrade in the battle of Leipzig, where he was killed. Realising that Moreau had been induced to conspire by an envious wife, Napoleon bore a flattering testimony to Josephine, when he cried: "Not every man has as good a wife as I!" He was right, Josephine was good, and she proved it by pleading for Polignac's pardon, which was finally granted, to the great relief of the royalist party.

The plot, however, had further fatal consequences; for it so roused Napoleon's suspicions and anger, that he determined to end all future attempts of a similar nature by seizing and executing the Duke of Enghien, a member of the royal family, who was then in Germany. A troop of dragoons, therefore, crossed the frontier one night, seized the unsuspecting Duke in bed, and conveyed him to Vincennes. Tried there by a special jury, he was executed immediately, although he protested to the last that he had no designs against the First Consul's life, and begged to be allowed to see him.

Josephine, who often guessed her husband's thoughts, discovered this plan, and vainly tried to induce him to give up all thought of arresting the Duke, because she rightly felt that such a deed of treachery would smirch his fame for ever. On the way to Malmaison, on Sunday afternoon, she told Madame de Rémusat that the



Consul intended to arrest the Duke, and when this court lady saw Napoleon plant a cypress on the morrow, she thought the tree singularly appropriate to the time. The news of the Duke's capture and arrival at Vincennes made Madame de Rémusat turn so pale that Napoleon abruptly asked her why she did not use rouge, and when she indifferently answered that she had forgotten to bring any, he laughingly declared that Josephine would never be guilty of such an oversight, and gave vent to the strange aphorism: "Two things are eminently becoming to a woman, rouge and tears."

Josephine, as we have seen, had thoroughly accustomed him to rouge, and now, in her distress lest he might carry out his purpose and kill the Duke, fell down on her knees before him and tried the power of tears. But Napoleon would not heed her, and, roughly pushing her away, reiterated fiercely: "Mind your own business. This is none of woman's business!"

But although he could thus silence the wife who feared nothing so much as his displeasure, he could not check her tears, which flowed more freely than ever when a messenger brought her the Duke's last letter, and a token which he could trust no one else to deliver so safely to the lady he loved.

Although some authorities claim that Napoleon's subordinates were over-hasty, and that the Duke's life would have been spared had the First Consul's orders been rightly executed, Napoleon himself justifies the deed in his will. But he was very gloomy in those days at Malmaison, and after a dinner where Josephine wept incessantly, and where no one uttered a word, he callously dismissed the whole subject, saying: "At least, they will see we are not to be trifled with, and I hope they will henceforth leave us alone!"



Under such circumstances, the sojourn at Malmaison proved anything but enjoyable; but Josephine greatly dreaded the return to Paris, and constantly wondered how the news would be received by the country at large, since even Napoleon's flatterers seemed struck dumb. This thought secretly troubled Napoleon also; but, strange to relate, the execution caused so little sensation at the time, that Talleyrand, who later condemned the deed, and professed the utmost devotion to the royal family, gave a brilliant ball three days after the tragic event. Many aristocrats were present at this entertainment, but the Consular party remained quietly at Malmaison until the next Sunday, when they attended Mass in the Tuileries as usual, but Napoleon gave no sign of feeling, although closely watched.

His inward trepidation was perceptible, however, at his next public appearance at the opera, for, contrary to his usual custom, he waited for Josephine before showing himself in the front part of his box, and when he did step forward with her, it was with as set a face as if about to storm an enemy's battery. Josephine, ghastly pale beneath her rouge, trembled visibly, but instead of the hisses both fully expected, they were greeted with such enthusiastic applause that they felt deeply relieved. About a week later, that Senate proposed that Napoleon should assume the crown; and when he and his household removed to St. Cloud for the rest of the summer, it was to prepare for the new parts they were soon to play as Emperor and Empress, such a title being deemed best fitted to rulers who owed their elevation to the army.

The days of preparation at St. Cloud were fraught with excitement and heartburnings, for all the courtiers were anxious for titles, places, and emoluments, and Napoleon had no small task to satisfy even the members



of his own family. Lucien and Jerome, having contracted marriages which he considered beneath the family dignity, and obstinately refusing to give up their wives, were simply disowned, although Josephine interceded warmly in behalf of the brothers-in-law who had treated her so badly. In fact, she begged so hard that, although Napoleon would not yield, he kissed her, exclaiming: "You are a good woman to plead for them!" Then, full of his grievance, he added: "It is hard to find in one's own family such resistance to high interests. I shall henceforth have to stand alone and depend on myself only. Well, I can get along without them, and Josephine will comfort me for all the rest!"

After this quarrel, Lucien went off to Italy with his mother, who sided with him in this affair. Lacking children of his own, yet anxious to settle the important question of succession, Napoleon now proposed to adopt the son of Louis and Hortense; but this raised a storm of opposition in his family, and even Louis declared he would never consent, either because he still resented the rumour which ascribed this child to Napoleon, and feared to confirm it by consenting, or because he would not relinquish all hopes of wearing the crown himself. When Napoleon insisted, he therefore vehemently replied: "No, I will never consent to it, and rather than bow down before my own son, I will leave France and take Napoleon with me, and we will see whether you dare rob a father of his child in the face of the world!"

Such opposition as this was insurmountable for the present; so the Senate, at Napoleon's request, duly announced that the imperial title would descend to Napoleon's offspring, and, in default of heirs to his body, to his adopted son, or to Joseph and Louis Bonaparte



and their children, the two other brothers being formally excluded from the succession.

These were also trying times for Josephine, for not only was she drawn into all the disputes, and called upon to sympathise with all parties in turn, but her tact was constantly required to smooth out differences. Besides, her own heart was sorely oppressed, for, being a royalist, it did not seem right to her that Napoleon should occupy the throne, and she was again haunted by the dread that, once crowned, he would repudiate her, to secure both a princely alliance and an heir to his power. Her most serious trouble, however, was a new fancy of Napoleon's for a court lady, which so roused Josephine's jealousy, that she rashly incurred her husband's anger.

Indeed, it seemed for awhile as if the Bonapartes' machinations would yet prevail, and Josephine be divorced even before she had ascended the throne, and it was then that Hortense said to Madame de Rémusat: "My mother has been very imprudent; she is going to lose a crown, but at least she will have peace." Hortense was, however, mistaken, for Josephine's tears and submissive behaviour so entirely disarmed Napoleon's wrath that he declared that while he hoped she would be brave enough to spare him all trouble by taking the initiative, should circumstances ever require it, he would never be able to part with her as long as she remained so affectionate and obedient.

On the 18th of May, the Senate formally voted that the title of emperor be awarded to Napoleon, and then all the Senators drove off in hot haste to St. Cloud, where Cambacérès, the former second consul, and present arch-chancellor, formally welcomed, "Napoleon, Emperor of the French." Then, turning to Josephine, he declared that France fully appreciated her goodness,



her gentle influence over the head of the state, and the amiable tact which gave a peculiar charm to all she did, and concluded by saying: "The Senate congratulates itself on being the first to greet your Imperial Majesty, and he who has the honour to be its spokesman presumes to hope that you will deign to count him among the number of your most faithful servants."

This senatorial election, confirmed by a plébiscite giving over three million votes to two thousand five hundred, proved most gratifying to Napoleon, who now proceeded to bestow titles and offices. His two brothers were made princes, and the fact that their wives were styled princesses made Napoleon's sisters clamour for similar titles. He refused at first, but their tears, remonstrances, and fainting fits finally prevailed. Sixteen of his generals received the title of marshal, and as their wives were delighted to see them fill important positions in the imperial court, they joyfully reported that, "Every one is wild with joy in the castle of St. Cloud!"

The very next day their Imperial Majesties held their first formal levée at the Tuileries, and gave a family dinner-party to the newly made princes and princesses. But while all the courtiers poured out adulation without stint, a punster called up the ghost of the murdered Duke by slily remarking: "'T is a fine play, but there are twenty scenes [*vingt scènes* is pronounced nearly like Vincennes] too many."

It was only on 14th of July — the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille — that Napoleon appeared in public with all the pomp of his new dignity. After hearing Mass in the Church of the Invalides, he distributed Legion of Honour crosses in the presence of all his court and of a vast concourse of people. Josephine, clad in rose-coloured tulle strewn with silver stars, and crowned

with diamond ears of wheat, was simply dazzling on this occasion, and the grace and affability she displayed made every one declare that "she outshone all the ladies who accompanied her."

The ceremony over, the new Empress proceeded to Aix-la-Chapelle, to drink the waters there, her husband arranging every particular of her journey, dictating each address she was to make on the way, and prescribing every item of her conduct most minutely. These instructions covered more than twenty-one closely written foolscap pages, and throughout the journey Josephine diligently conned these speeches and instructions. While she was drinking the mineral waters at Aix-la-Chapelle, Napoleon inspected his armaments at Calais and Dunkirk, writing her brief, but affectionate letters, in which he said: "I want very much to see you. You are always necessary to my happiness."

On joining Josephine at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he restored the yearly festival in honour of Charlemagne, Napoleon went with her to visit the mighty emperor's tomb in the cathedral vault. There the priests showed him a small casket, declaring it could only be opened by a man destined to rule the world. To their apparent surprise, and Napoleon's secret gratification, the box flew open at his touch; but when the same priests tried to win Josephine's favour by offering her Charlemagne's right arm, she gracefully answered that she would never consent to deprive Aix-la-Chapelle of so priceless a relic, as she was so fortunate as to be protected by the arm of a man as great as Charlemagne.

Taking different routes, so as to gratify as many people as possible by a sight of their pompous retinue, the Emperor and Empress proceeded to Cologne, Bonn, and Coblentz. There, Josephine embarked upon a yacht



and sailed up the Rhine, stopping here and there to enjoy the view, and receive the addresses of the various dignitaries of the places she passed. Throughout this trip, she fascinated every one by her charming manners and genuine kindness of heart, and dressed so artistically that she had the secret satisfaction of outshining many younger women, and among them the Princess of Baden, who had been suggested as the most suitable wife for Napoleon, in case of divorce. From Mayence, where a new ovation awaited them, but where Napoleon showed his usual want of consideration by making Josephine attend a ball in spite of a violent sick headache, the Imperial party journeyed by different roads back to Paris.

From the moment of their return, they and their court were almost exclusively engrossed by extensive preparations for the coming Coronation, which Napoleon had fully determined to make the finest pageant which had ever been seen, and the question was now mooted whether Josephine should be crowned too. The Bonapartes were all against it, for they had not abandoned all hope of getting rid of her and of the dreaded Beauharnais by a divorce. Josephine, on the other hand, was very eager to be crowned, not because she coveted the honour, but because she fancied it would make her position more secure, and effectually prevent any further plans for divorce. As for Napoleon, he was divided between an affectionate desire to gratify Josephine, and a secret conviction that he might yet regret it, for he knew it would be easier to repudiate an uncrowned consort, should he eventually decide to marry again for the sake of an heir. Selfish calculation had already won the day, and the tearful Josephine had been coldly informed that she would have no share in the coming solemnity, when the too openly paraded satisfaction of his brothers and



sisters produced a sudden revulsion, and Napoleon announced a change of mind.

On the 7th of November, 1804, the Emperor called a family and official council at the Tuileries, to regulate every detail of the ceremony; but here new difficulties arose, his brothers and sisters flatly refusing to carry their Imperial Majesties' trains, as etiquette required. The quarrel raged for six days before a compromise was effected, whereby Napoleon's two brothers consented to support the Emperor's *mantle*, while his sisters performed the same office for the Empress, on condition that certain officers of their households were detailed to do them honour by carrying their *trains*.

Napoleon, who was very dramatic in all his tastes, sent for actors and artists to suggest the best setting for this ceremony, and finally commissioned the painter Isabey to make seven working designs of the principal scenes in the coronation ceremony, so that each participant would know exactly where and how to stand and move. It was next to impossible to execute such a commission satisfactorily in the given space of time; so the artist cleverly substituted a huge ground plan of the cathedral, upon which he grouped a hundred or more dolls, dressed to represent the various dignitaries. This device charmed the Emperor, who made all his court study the grouping and attitude of the puppets, until all knew perfectly each detail of the part they were to play in the great pageant. Even coachmen, horses, grooms, pages, and guards were made to practise their various parts, driving over the whole course in the appointed order, so that there might not be even the slightest hitch in the glorious performance.

Meantime, jewellers, dressmakers, tailors, armourers, carriage-makers, saddlers, etc., were all hard at work, for



no expense was spared to make this a most brilliant spectacle, the people being all agog with curiosity, and particularly pleased by the fact that the Pope was coming to Paris in person for the ceremony. Toward the end of the month, under pretence of hunting, the Imperial court was transferred to Fontainebleau, and there Napoleon met Pius VII. at the cross-roads, on the 25th of November. Dismounting from his steed, the Emperor advanced toward the papal carriage, and the aged prelate was compelled to step out in the mud, although he ruefully glanced at his white garb and slippers before doing so. The first greetings exchanged, a carriage drove up, forcing its way, as if by accident, between the imperial and papal parties in such a manner that the Pope and Emperor were separated. They, therefore, entered the vehicle simultaneously from opposite sides, thus settling the vexed question of precedence. This was a clever device on the part of the Emperor, who, while wishing to show every courtesy to his reverend guest, was childishly unwilling at any time to allow any one to precede him.

Driving thus, side by side, they arrived at the castle, where Josephine stood on the steps to welcome her guest, and receive the apostolic blessing. The next day the Pope gave her a private audience, and, learning that her marriage still lacked Heaven's sanction, promised to use his influence to make Napoleon consent to a religious ceremony before the coronation took place. On the 29th of November, the court set out for Paris, the Pope and Emperor riding side by side in the same carriage, escorted by the magnificent Mameluck guards. Thus they passed through the throng to the Tuileries, where the Pope and his suite were lodged in the Flora Pavilion. There the Holy Father held daily receptions, and when the weather prevented his going out for the

drive, in the course of which he blessed the kneeling people, the crowd was admitted into the Gallery of Apollo, where the Pope moved slowly between two dense rows of ardent Roman Catholics.

Although it was customary for a sovereign to receive communion in public at his coronation, Napoleon refused to do so, saying it would be an act of rank hypocrisy on his part. He was, however, forced to yield to another religious ceremony; for the Pope absolutely refused to consecrate Josephine for coronation unless the Church first sanctioned their union. In deference to the Emperor's wishes, however, this ceremony was performed only at midnight, on the eve of the coronation, and so secretly that people doubted for years whether it had really taken place. This marriage was performed by Cardinal Fesch, Napoleon's uncle, and witnessed by Berthier and Talleyrand, the priest of the parish being absent, although his presence was later declared indispensable to make the contract binding. Josephine, overjoyed to have her wish fulfilled at last, notwithstanding Napoleon's evident reluctance, wept so profusely that her eyes were still red the next morning, and she carefully hoarded the certificate, little suspecting the fatal flaw which made it null.

That self-same night, another religious ceremony was taking place at Notre Dame, where red lights blazed on the tall towers, for General de Ségur held solemn vigil over the imperial insigniæ which had been laid on the altar. This was no small honour or responsibility, for the precious stones adorning these ornaments were invaluable from historic association, aside from their intrinsic worth. He must, therefore, have rejoiced to see day dawn without accident, although the 2nd of December, 1804, proved bitterly cold and very misty.



To prolong the procession, and prevent any confusion, it had been arranged that the papal cortege would leave the Tuileries at nine; so long before that hour, the people took up their stations in the street to see it pass. The Pope was escorted by troops and Church dignitaries, and preceded by a monk on a white mule, bearing aloft a huge cross. The Pope himself sat in a state carriage, drawn by eight dapple-grey steeds, blessing the people on either hand as he passed slowly on to Notre Dame.

Meantime, the court assembled for Napoleon's inspection at the Tuileries. The Emperor himself was clad in white velvet, embroidered with gold, his crimson doublet and cloak fastened by diamond buttons, while a flashing aigrette held the plumes in his black velvet toque. Josephine wore a marvellous robe of silver tissue, embroidered with gold, her white neck being set off by an elegant "fraise" of jewelled lace, and her head crowned with innumerable short curls and a diadem in which the crown fitted exactly, as Napoleon had carefully ascertained the day before. Aside from the diadem and crown, which represented an almost fabulous sum of money, she also wore diamond earrings, a necklace, and a belt which made her seem ablaze with jewels. This costly apparel was so becoming, that the court ladies tell us she looked only twenty-five, although she was in reality already past forty when crowned.

Napoleon's brothers and sisters were so gorgeous in their court array, that he looked at them with undisguised admiration, and, unable to restrain his exultation, proudly exclaimed: "Ah, Joseph! if our father could only see us!" But the dead father was not the only member of the family missing on this occasion, for Lucien and Jerome were still in disgrace because they

would not repudiate their plebeian wives, and Madame Lætitia had refused to grace the ceremony from which they were debarred.

Legend states that when all the court was assembled and ready to start, Napoleon suddenly perceived the lawyer who had objected to his marriage with Josephine, and archly pointing to his toque and the sword in whose hilt the magnificent "Regent" blazed, triumphantly remarked: "Well, Monsieur Raguideau, here's the hat and sword!"

It was half-past ten when the Imperial cortege finally started, Napoleon and Josephine stepping into their wonderful glass coach, which rested on richly chased gilt wheels, and was surmounted by an imperial crown and four gilt eagles. Josephine had scarcely seated herself in this sumptuous carriage, when she perceived that she had made a mistake, and laughingly changed places, bidding Napoleon imitate her unless he preferred to ride backward like a man condemned to the gallows! (This mistake, which only caused amusement at the time, was later regarded as one of the bad omens which marred this solemn occasion.) When the Emperor and Empress were duly seated, Joseph and Louis took their places opposite them, and as the coach moved slowly out of the gate, drawn by its eight steeds covered with rich housings, it was greeted by deafening cheers. The procession, consisting of twenty regiments of cavalry and eighteen six-horse carriages full of court dignitaries, slowly passed across the Carrousel, up the rue de Rivoli, across the Pont au Change, and as the dazzling imperial coach drew up before the archiepiscopal palace, the sun suddenly burst through the clouds.

This happy coincidence gave new zest to the cheers, for every one considered it a good omen; besides, the



warm sunshine was very welcome to people who had been standing on the cold pavement for hours, and were grateful for any warmth. They were not the only ones to suffer from the cold, however, for all the court ladies were bare-necked and scantily clothed, and it was fortunate that Josephine was carefully painted, for she would else have appeared blue with the cold, the only provision for her comfort in the imperial coach being a small rug of white fur spread under her daintily shod feet.

At the archiepiscopal palace, Josephine donned her imperial mantle of crimson velvet, heavily embroidered with gold and lined with ermine, and there, too, Napoleon exchanged his court costume for the coronation garb of white satin, and an imperial mantle, which, while it greatly resembled Josephine's, was even richer than hers, and weighed no less than eighty pounds. The procession was formed and about to enter the cathedral, when Josephine suddenly dropped her ring, which Eugene found and restored, but whose temporary loss was subsequently considered another evil omen. The ushers, heralds, pages, masters of ceremonies, and dignitaries bearing the Empress' insigniæ slowly advanced in picturesque groups ten feet apart, and were followed by Josephine, escorted on either hand by squire and chamberlain, while her sisters-in-law supported her imperial mantle. These ladies were followed by the officers of their households bearing their trains; then came the Empress' ladies of honour, and the state dignitaries carrying Napoleon's insigniæ.

The Emperor himself walked proudly alone, his mantle supported by his two brothers, and by Cambacérès and Lebrun, who had been second and third consuls, but were now arch-chancellor and arch-treasurer of the new Empire. Next came court dignitaries, state offi-

cials, ministers, officers, etc., all in gala uniform, and fairly blazing with decorations and gold lace. This glittering cortege slowly moved up the aisle of the huge church, which was all hung with crimson and gold, and brilliantly illuminated by innumerable candles. The Pope and clergy, picturesquely grouped near the altar, awaited the coming of this procession; and when their Imperial Majesties had taken their places on a small platform, Pius VII. solemnly intoned the Veni Creator. During this part of the ceremony, the Emperor consigned his hand of justice, sceptre, crown, sword, and mantle to the appointed dignitaries, who laid them on the altar. Then Josephine gave her ring, mantle, and crown to her officers, to be disposed of in a similar way.

After the Emperor had taken his oath, he and Josephine knelt side by side on their crimson, gold-embroidered cushions, while the priests sang the litany. They were next led to the altar, solemnly anointed by the Pope, and duly escorted back to their seats. But the grand musical Mass was again interrupted at the "Gradual," for the blessing of the imperial ornaments, and their Majesties, advancing once more to the altar, received these emblems, one by one, from the hands of the Pope himself, donning them with the help of their attendants. The Emperor had received all his attributes, save the crown, which the Pope slowly raised, expecting to place it upon the imperial head. But Napoleon, who had been watching for this moment, suddenly made a step forward, took the crown from the aged prelate's hands, and, facing the immense audience, proudly and deliberately crowned himself! At that very moment, a tiny stone fell from the vault high above him, striking his head with considerable force; but he paid no heed to

the accident, which was perceived by very few, although one spectator managed to secure and preserve the stone as souvenir of this bad omen.

Napoleon, having thus crowned himself, now proceeded to do the same for Josephine, who, advancing slowly, gracefully sank down on her knees before him, with clasped hands and a bent face, making such an exquisite picture that none who saw it could ever forget it. Napoleon, touched by her attitude, gently fitted the crown upon her head, lingering over his task "as if promising it would rest lightly" upon the brow of the woman he loved.

Both being crowned, now proceeded, in the same order as they had entered, toward the great throne erected against the main door of the cathedral. There was, however, a slight delay at this point, for the haughty princesses suddenly hung back, and only resumed their office of mantle-bearers when sharply called to order by Napoleon. But their help was so grudgingly given, that Josephine felt as if they were pulling her backward, and she almost rolled down the steep steps leading to the throne. Napoleon, holding his sceptre and hand of justice, and further embarrassed by his unwonted long robes, also experienced some difficulty; but both finally reached their thrones safely, where they received the Pope's blessing. This was followed by deafening cheers from the audience, while booming cannons announced abroad that "Napoleon, Emperor of the French, was crowned and enthroned."

A few minutes later, the glittering procession again swept through the church toward the altar, for the Te Deum and the Offertory, their Majesties' crowns being temporarily removed by their attendants at the Elevation of the Host. When Mass was finally over, and the



THE CORONATION OF JOSEPHINE, 1804.
David.



Emperor had duly sworn to respect the constitution, the Imperial party went back to the archiepiscopal palace, from whence they drove back to the Tuileries, so slowly, that it was half-past six before they arrived there, and a good part of the journey had to be accomplished by torch light.

Once home, Napoleon impatiently removed his state trappings to resume his wonted uniform; but he playfully insisted upon Josephine retaining her becoming apparel for their tête-à-tête dinner. In fact, his mood was so merry that evening, that he gallantly informed the court ladies that they owed him thanks for affording them so fine a chance to display their charms and good taste, and was far more complimentary than usual.

The coronation ceremony was followed by a series of public and private entertainments, which made that winter the gayest the capital had ever seen. Popular fêtes with games and feasting, military pageants, illuminations, gala representations, balls, and receptions, followed each other with bewildering rapidity, and the Emperor and Empress were received everywhere with extravagant demonstrations of joy. Almost the only drawback was the pouring rain which marred the distribution of the eagles to the troops on the Champ de Mars. Both their Majesties appeared there in imperial state; but Josephine had to withdraw long before the end of the ceremony, for the water began to drip through the dais above her head and threatened to ruin her beautiful gown. Napoleon's sister Caroline alone remained at her post, although she had a puddle of water in her lap before the ceremony concluded; but she laughingly averred that she was only learning her trade, as all princesses must be trained to endure the greatest discomfort with a pleasant smile on their lips.



The city of Paris gave their Majesties a magnificent banquet and ball, presenting Josephine with an elaborate toilet service of massive gold, and giving Napoleon a fine table service of silver gilt plate. But while the Imperial party was feasting in the City Hall, the people held high revelry on the square, where the municipality provided food for all, and where the fountains flowed with beer and wine. The marshals' ball, given soon after at the Opera House, was equally magnificent, for each of those newly appointed officers contributed ten thousand francs, and every device was used to insure a brilliant success.

Besides Isabey's famous cartoons, one of the most interesting mementos of the Coronation now extant is doubtless the huge painting which is said to contain about one hundred portraits. David, who had helped arrange the pageant, had been commissioned to commemorate it, and, the choice being left to him, he selected the moment when Napoleon crowned Josephine. The picture was greatly admired, but when one critic ventured to remark that Josephine was made to appear too young, the artist slily retorted: "Well, go and tell her so!"

As soon as this huge painting was finished, Napoleon came to view it, and after a prolonged, silent examination, he approached the anxious painter and said: "Well done, David, very well done. You seized my whole intention, you have represented me as a French knight. I am much obliged to you for thus transmitting to coming centuries the proof of affection I wished to bestow upon the one who shares with me the cares of the government." Then, removing his hat and bowing low, Napoleon added impressively: "David, I salute you!"

The picture which elicited such praise from Napoleon

is, however, inaccurate in some respects, for Madame Lætitia, who occupies the centre of the background, was *not* present.

The Coronation having taken place, imperial etiquette was strictly maintained, Napoleon regulating every detail with military precision. Josephine now had an extensive "household," for besides her first lady-in-waiting, Madame de la Rochefoucault, she had seventeen other ladies to attend her in turn. They all found her a gentle, amiable mistress, and her reader declared: "I don't think there ever existed a better tempered or gentler-natured woman." This excessive good nature, however, degenerated into weakness; for Josephine, as we have seen, could never refuse a gift or favour, and was so lavish that she often spent far more than even her large allowance would warrant.

Besides, people presumed upon her good-nature, and shortly after her coronation, for instance, induced her to plead for pardon for a man who had murdered his wife in a fit of jealousy. Josephine, therefore, attacked Napoleon, finally using the argument that he must grant this favour as it was the first she asked of the *Emperor*. But Napoleon still refused, explaining his reasons for doing so, and proudly added: "When it is known that even your persuasions could not induce me to commit an act of injustice, no one will henceforth dare to petition me for such a purpose."

The brilliant winter of 1805 ended with the baptism of Hortense's two young sons at St. Cloud; and soon after, the Pope departed, joining the Imperial party again at Lyons for the celebration of Easter. Josephine had little time to prepare for this journey, her first intimation of their departure being Napoleon's midnight order: "Horses at six for Italy." In spite of this short notice,



however, she was ready in time, for she prided herself upon never keeping any one waiting half a minute, when punctuality depended upon her alone, and often said: "Punctuality is true politeness, especially in the great."

The journey proved most enjoyable, for although Napoleon had not taken her into his confidence, all his preparations had been carefully made in advance, including the transportation of her suite and luggage, which he laughingly declared was a more serious problem than the removal of the artillery of a whole division of the grand army. After a series of ovations, and a brief visit at Brienne, the Imperial party reached Mont Cenis, where they found elegant sedan-chairs awaiting them, in which they were carried over the mountain; and when they reached Marengo they celebrated the fifth anniversary of the battle, by laying the corner-stone of a monument to Desaix. Napoleon here gave Josephine the sight of a sham battle, admirably described in one of the most thrilling chapters of Xaintine's "Picciola."

On the morrow, Napoleon met his brother Jerome at Alexandra, and having prevailed upon him to repudiate his young American wife, at last deigned to restore him to favour. Then Napoleon and Josephine passed on to Milan, where a new ovation awaited them, and where, from a gallery in the magnificent cathedral, Josephine saw her husband raise the iron crown of Lombardy to his head, and heard the thrilling tone in which he uttered the time-honoured: "God has given it to me, woe to him who touches it!"

Although Josephine was not crowned Queen of Italy, she had a full share of all the honours showered upon her husband, appearing everywhere with the grace and affability which had won the Italians' hearts when she was only the wife of General Bonaparte. At the Brera

Exposition, she and Napoleon greatly admired Canova's Hebe, which they purchased for Malmaison, and his fine statue of Clement XIII.; but such a throng had collected there to see them, that an old man was knocked down, and when Josephine compassionately raised him with her own hands, the impressionable crowd almost went mad with joy.

On the 7th of June, Josephine had a new gratification, for Eugene de Beauharnais was appointed viceroy of Italy, amid the deafening cheers of the people, whom this choice delighted. The only drawback to the Empress' pleasure over this appointment, was the thought that she would be parted from this beloved son. Napoleon, finding her weeping over this prospect, added, however, a new pang to her sorrow by remarking sadly: "If the absence of your children causes you such grief, judge of my feelings. The affection you display for them, makes me feel very keenly the misfortune of having none of my own."

After establishing his sister Eliza in the principality of Lucca and Piombino, Napoleon returned to Turin with Josephine, where they had recently taken leave of the Pope; and hearing that a new coalition was forming, and war would soon be declared, the Imperial couple suddenly hastened back to France. Such was the speed with which they travelled, that their suite and baggage could not keep up with them, and water had to be thrown upon the smoking axles at every relay. But even this rate of speed seemed too slow for Napoleon, who constantly thrust his head out of the window, crying: "On! on! we do not move!" Posting thus at full speed, they arrived at Fontainebleau unexpectedly, after an absence of one hundred days, and while the caretaker of the palace improvised a meal



for them, Josephine borrowed a change of linen from her former chambermaid.

The next day, the Imperial couple drove on to St. Cloud; and when they appeared at the Opera that evening, their return was hailed with extravagant delight by the Parisians. Josephine spent the main part of that summer at St. Cloud, entertaining incessantly, and enjoying frequent visits from her daughter and two small grandsons; while the Emperor diligently continued his preparations for war. But, one evening, he abruptly remarked to Josephine: "You have played the part of Empress long enough, now you must again become the wife of a general. I am going to leave immediately, and I will take you with me to Strasburg."

This decision was gladly welcomed by Josephine, because she knew that she would thus sooner receive news from him during the campaign. But the letters she got at Strasburg, although anxiously expected and eagerly read, were not by far as affectionate as those she had received from Italy, and laughed over, nine years before. Napoleon wrote that he was never so well and happy as when exposed to the turmoils and hardships of war; but Josephine longed for peace, because her tender heart ached at the thought of the suffering each battle entailed, and because she was sad and lonely without her husband.

But although she begged permission to share the Emperor's fatigues and perils, he would not allow her to do so, and bade her go instead to Baden, Stuttgart, and Münich, where, he said, she must accept every homage, "For they owe you everything, and you owe them nothing but courtesy."

Josephine eagerly welcomed this opportunity to draw nearer to the man she loved, and set out with her suite,

enjoying all the adulation she received, but anxiously watching for tidings of the next battle. They reached her late one evening, Napoleon's messenger having ridden one hundred and fifty miles in twelve hours, to bring her the news of the victory of Austerlitz, the culminating point of his military glory. Josephine, whose keen ears had caught the first sound of hoof-beats, ran out to meet the messenger, and in her delight rewarded him with a diamond ring which she drew from her own finger.

The next day, the happy tidings were confirmed by a letter from Napoleon, and by the time Josephine reached Münich, rumours were already afloat that the Emperor was arranging a marriage between Eugene and Princess Augusta of Bavaria. The demands of society and a slight indisposition having prevented Josephine from writing as fully and frequently as usual during this journey, Napoleon addressed her the following playful remonstrance : —

" Great Empress, no letter from you since your departure from Strasburg. You have passed through Baden, Stuttgart, and Münich without writing us a word. That is neither very kind nor very loving." Then, after briefly giving her the news, he concluded in the same strain, saying, " Deign, from the height of your grandeur, to vouchsafe a little attention to your slaves."

On the last day of that eventful year, Napoleon entered Münich by torchlight, and on the morrow solemnly proclaimed Maximilian Joseph, King of Bavaria. Four days later, he wrote to his stepson, bidding him join him as soon as possible at Münich, but giving him no hint of the reason for summoning him



thither. Eugene, travelling night and day, reached Münich early one morning before his mother had risen, and was immediately ushered into Napoleon's presence. Knowing how happy Josephine would be to hear of her son's safe arrival, one of her women hastened to announce his coming; but when Josephine heard that her son had gone to Napoleon first, she burst into jealous tears, which only ceased when the door was flung wide open and Napoleon entered with Eugene, exclaiming soothingly: "There, madame, there is your big booby of a son. I am bringing him to you myself!"

Josephine's "big booby," a handsome, noble-hearted, dashing young soldier of twenty-four, was now informed of his stepfather's plans. But although it seemed somewhat strange that his bride should have consented to the marriage nine days before he knew anything about it, he was too heart-whole to object. Josephine, watching the two young people carefully, was further delighted to see how favourably they impressed one another, and when the wedding took place eleven days later, she could congratulate her son upon having combined a love-match with a political alliance. Her joy over this marriage and unexpected reunion was, besides, enhanced by the fact that Napoleon now publicly adopted Eugene, giving him his own name, and promising that he should inherit the crown of Italy.

The wedding festivities over, the young people went to Milan, while Napoleon and Josephine returned to France, where they were welcomed with greater enthusiasm than ever, for the victory of Austerlitz had greatly enhanced the national glory. The return of their Majesties was the signal for new festivities, which culminated in the spring with the marriage of Stéphanie de Beauharnais, Josephine's niece, whom Napoleon adopted



before marrying her to the Prince of Baden. This was a new occasion for heartburnings, for Napoleon's sisters resented the fact that precedence should be given to the Emperor's adopted daughter, and Josephine found him far too attentive to so young and charming a princess. Still, she dared not show her jealousy, for she was glad to further the interests of the Beauharnais family, and fully enjoyed appearing with her husband on the Tuileries balcony, in all the bravery of her imperial state, to present the newly married couple to a cheering crowd.

This marriage was soon followed by a reception of the Turkish embassy, which brought Josephine beautiful pearls and priceless Eastern stuffs, and by the official reception of the Dutch envoys, who offered the crown of Holland to Louis and Hortense. But although Josephine was proud to think her son and daughter were ruling over the kingdoms of Italy and of Holland, she nevertheless missed their presence sorely. Besides, she knew how regretfully Hortense left the congenial society of Parisian artists and writers, to follow her morose husband into a country where people and language seemed equally strange. She also mourned parting with her grandchildren, both of whom she idolised; while Napoleon centred all his affections upon the eldest, a remarkably bright child of three. This boy showed a strange preference for his august uncle, although the latter teased him unmercifully at times, and was never so pleased as when he had roused the spirited child's anger or resistance.

Josephine tried to keep in touch with Hortense by a lively correspondence, wherein she revealed all her maternal tenderness, and her strange dependence upon the stronger character of her daughter. She was, however, to see Hortense again much sooner than she expected,



for, a new war having broken out against Russia and Prussia, Napoleon arranged that Hortense and Stéphanie should meet Josephine at Mayence, and keep her company there, while their husbands joined him with their armies.

Finding that he must start sooner than expected, Napoleon suddenly determined to leave the Tuileries without warning Josephine, who, discovering his intention at the last minute, ran down to his carriage half dressed, clinging so passionately to him that he could not leave her behind. He, therefore, gave a few hasty orders, and rolling her up in his travelling rug, drove quickly away. This tête-à-tête journey proved most enjoyable to Josephine; but when the moment of parting came, Napoleon was moved to tears and almost fainted at the sight of his wife's great grief.

Josephine, left at Mayence with her suite, beguiled the time in the congenial society of her daughter and niece, eagerly watching for her husband's brief letters, wherein he stated that while all was going well for him, the hapless Queen of Prussia would soon have the "cruel pleasure" of witnessing a battle. Josephine, who was as credulous as most créoles of her time, was telling fortunes by cards, and had just predicted, "Great news, incredible victory," twice in succession, when a messenger arrived from Jéna, with a letter from Napoleon, saying:

"My dear Josephine: we have overtaken the Prussian army, it no longer exists. I am well and press you to my heart."

This strange coincidence so delighted her that she triumphantly exclaimed: "Well, will you believe in my cards, after this!"

Napoleon's subsequent letters were almost equally brief bulletins of health and success; but while he seemed



to think of nothing but glory, she pitied the vanquished, and gently reproached her husband for mentioning unhappy Queen Louise in slighting terms. Napoleon answered this letter by a compliment which pleased her greatly, for he said: "I have received your letter in which you seem to reproach me for speaking ill of women. The truth is, I hate a scheming woman above all things. I am used to good, sweet, conciliating women, those are the ones I love. If they have spoiled me, it is none of my fault, but yours." Then he went on to tell her how he had given Madame de Hatzfelt leave to burn the only tangible proof of her husband's treachery, — posing as a magnanimous man, although history claims that Hatzfelt could never have been justly sentenced to death on this evidence, — and concluded his letter with the words: "So you see, I love good, sweet, simple women, because those only are like you."

Prussia was conquered; but peace had not yet been signed, and as it seemed as if the war might carry him still further away, Josephine entreated to be allowed to join him. For a time Napoleon encouraged her to believe they might soon meet; but he finally announced that he must go on to Poland, and that it was entirely out of the question that she should travel so far at the beginning of winter. This decision was a severe blow to Josephine, who feared that a prolonged absence would weaken her influence, and who was further disquieted by rumours of Napoleon's unveiled admiration for the handsome Polish women. But although he vowed he was flattered by her jealousy, and had no time to ascertain whether the Polish women were pretty or not, he was deceiving Josephine, who suited him so well that he had fully determined not to divorce her until he was quite sure he could become a father. Urged on by evil



counsellors, ever ready to help him gratify each passing fancy, however criminal, Napoleon selected for this immoral experiment Madame Walewska, a beautiful young Polish woman, who had recently been married to an old and unloved spouse. Artful people so worked upon the feelings of this ardently patriotic young woman, that they made her believe that Poland would be lost unless she consented to sacrifice herself upon what they wickedly called the altar of her country.

Napoleon, violently enamoured of her beauty, and determined to overcome her resistance, helped to confirm her in this belief by one of his famous simulated outbursts of anger, dashing his watch to pieces in her presence and violently declaring: "But remember, that, like this watch, which I hold in my hand and destroy in your presence, Poland's very name shall perish with all your hopes, if you drive me to extremities, by repelling my love and withholding your own."

Young, inexperienced, and not only forsaken, but urged on by persons who were older and should have been wiser, the unfortunate woman succumbed, and, yielding to Napoleon's personal magnetism, — to which she was not insensible, — forsook all that honour holds dear, in the mistaken belief that she was serving her country. But she gave many proofs of unselfish love to the man who so cruelly used her, not only following him to the castle of Frankenstein, where she lived in utter seclusion in one room, but accompanying him later to Paris. There, she was presented at court, and she ultimately bore him a son, who, although never openly recognised, is mentioned by name in Napoleon's will. He lived to become one of Napoleon III.'s principal advisors, and his striking resemblance to his illustrious father called forth frequent comments at the court of the Second Empire.



Madame Walewska further showed her devotion to Napoleon by visiting him at Fontainebleau and Elba, where she offered to share his exile, and by making friends with Josephine, whom she visited at Malmaison after the abdication, to mourn with her over Napoleon's misfortunes. After the battle of Waterloo, Madame Walewska married one of Napoleon's cousins; but it is popularly believed that her death, in 1816, was caused by her intense grief over her former lover's sufferings on the island of St. Helena.

While under the spell of his passion for Madame Walewska, Napoleon, hoping to blind Josephine, wrote more frequent and affectionate letters than usual. But this stratagem proved a failure, for Josephine intuitively perceived when Napoleon was deceiving her, and in this case her suspicions were amply confirmed by the spies whom she feed to keep her posted concerning all her husband's doings. Her jealousy and dejection became so apparent, that rumours of it reached Napoleon's ears, and when he bade her return to Paris, he added: "They tell me you are always weeping; shame! how naughty that is! Your letter of the 7th wounds me. Do try to be worthy of me and stronger-minded. I wish you to assume all the necessary state in Paris, and above all to be contented. I am perfectly well and love you very dearly; but if you cry all the time, I shall consider you devoid of courage and force of character. I don't like cowards, and an empress *must* be brave."

These bracing admonitions proved quite unavailing, however; for Josephine knew there was no truth or honour in the man she loved, and that his protestations of fidelity were all false. She dared not, however, resist his will, so she sadly parted from her daughter and grandchildren, and wended her way back to Paris alone.



Still, Josephine's nature was never very deep, and even while she grieved over her private sorrows, her vanity was nevertheless gratified by the continuous ovation which accompanied her to Paris, where her return was welcomed by a series of fulsome addresses. In February, Josephine learned the news of the victory at Eylau, and in March rejoiced over the birth of Eugene's first child, who was called Josephine, at Napoleon's special request. But these good tidings could not silence the court gossip concerning Napoleon and his Polish mistress, gossip which was reported to Napoleon, and which he bade Josephine check, saying: "I learn, my dear, that the slander talked in your drawing-room at Mayence is being revived. Do silence people. I will be very much displeased with you, if you do not put a stop to it."

Although in most of his letters he enjoined upon her to be "gay and contented," she was very far from that enviable state of mind. Still her mental suffering was to be further intensified by the sudden news of the death, from croup, of her eldest grandchild, her favourite, as well as Napoleon's. These tidings reached her on the same day as Gérard's picture, representing the boy playing with his illustrious uncle's hat and sword.

Josephine, not daring to leave the country without Napoleon's permission, hastened immediately to Laeken on the frontier, imploring Hortense to meet her there, so they could mingle their tears. But the calamity which almost robbed Hortense of her senses, and which so sorely afflicted Josephine, merely shocked Napoleon, although he promised a reward of twelve thousand francs for the best paper on the treatment of the fell disease which had so suddenly robbed him of the promising child he had often wished to adopt as his heir.



Hortense's health was so affected by the loss of this boy, that her husband allowed her to return with Josephine to Paris; and when the physicians ordered her to Cauterets in the Pyrenees, he followed her there, during a period of temporary peace in their troubled matrimonial affairs. Napoleon, whose nature would not brook grieving over the past, tried to brace Hortense by philosophical platitudes, which, however, proved less helpful than Josephine's companionship and her tender letters, full of womanly details about the pretty sayings and doings of the second child, who remained with her while his mother was in the Pyrenees.

In June, Napoleon won the battle of Friedland, and had the famous interview with the Emperor of Russia at Tilsit. There they arranged the terms of a peace, in which Napoleon abandoned the cause of the Poles, while Alexander allowed the King of Prussia to be robbed of a great part of his territory. This monarch, in despair, sent for his wife, hoping she might obtain better terms from the conqueror; but while Napoleon was evidently flattered by the beautiful queen's attempt to mollify him, he resisted all her efforts, and proudly wrote to his wife: "While I was polite, I did not give up my politics."

Other accounts claim that, keeping his own interests constantly in sight, Napoleon proved very unchivalrous toward Queen Louise, leading her to expect more than he was willing to grant, and playing with her as a cat does with a mouse. He was so elated over his victories and the terms of peace he finally secured, that Josephine, who knew him better than any one else, ruefully cried: "The Emperor is so happy that he will surely scold a great deal when he comes back!"

The Emperor's return, after almost a year's absence, was welcomed by addresses full of flattery, for this last



campaign had further enhanced his military glory. Not only did he now deem himself invincible, but he considered himself so far above all other human beings; that even his wife no longer dared to call him Bonaparte as of old, but generally addressed him as "your Majesty" and "Sire." In her fear of rousing his displeasure, and thereby furnishing a pretext for the dreaded divorce, she dared neither reproach him for his infidelity, nor object openly to Madame Walewska's presentation at court. Instead of finding fault with him, she, on the contrary, tried to retain her hold upon him by the utmost gentleness and submission, showing almost abject gratitude when he allowed her to share his next birthday ovation at St. Cloud.

In that same month of August, they celebrated in the Tuileries the marriage of Jerome Bonaparte and the Princess of Wurtemberg, which had been definitely settled at Tilsit, where Jerome was named King of Westphalia. Hortense, having returned from Cauterets more depressed than ever, after her brief reconciliation and last quarrel with her husband, joined Josephine at Fontainebleau, where both women spent hours in the beautiful forest, musing over their sorrowful positions, while Napoleon hunted as usual. But his company was even more disquieting than his absence, for he now constantly spoke of his need of an heir, declaring that it was only too evident no member of the Bonaparte family would ever submit to be ruled by a Beauharnais, or any other man he might select to succeed him. Anxious to spare his own feelings and repute, he told Josephine that her love for him ought to prompt her to spare him further pain by taking the initiative, and withdrawing of her own free will, so that he could marry again.

Sundry hints had prepared Josephine for what was

coming, and knowing that assent or opposition would be equally dangerous, she now followed a clever piece of advice by saying submissively: "Sire, you are the master and shall decide my fate. When you order me to leave the Tuileries, I will obey instantly; but the least you can do is to command it positively. I am your wife; I have been crowned by you in the presence of the Pope. Such honours cannot voluntarily be set aside. If you divorce me, all France must know that it is you who send me away, and shall be made fully aware both of my obedience and of my profound sorrow."

Fouché, one of Napoleon's most efficient, but unscrupulous servants, acting probably by his order, although apparently of his own volition, sent Josephine a diplomatic letter, in which he, too, urged her to withdraw, so his master could marry again. But instead of answering this letter, Josephine showed it to Napoleon, complaining of Fouché's officiousness, and renewing her declaration that in this matter she would yield only to positive orders from him.

Napoleon, caught in his own trap, or really displeased at Fouché's impertinence, now wrote him a sharp letter, bidding him mind his own business, and, being a prey just then to one of his spasmodic attacks of love for Josephine, he vowed with tears that he would never be able to bid her depart. This vacillation on his part arose not only from his undoubted though supremely selfish love for Josephine, but also from a sneaking fear lest another wife might prove more exacting and less accommodating. Besides, he was not free from a superstitious dread that good luck might desert him if he broke off his marriage, for he was aware that, according to the popular belief, "a man who fails in his duty to a woman who has claims upon his love and protection, never after-



wards prospers." This conviction had been encouraged by Josephine, who once showed him a star, saying: "Bonaparte, behold that bright star; it is *mine;* and remember, to mine, not to thine, has sovereignty been promised. Separate our fates and your star fades!"

Now, while one faction of courtiers was in favour of the divorce, the majority of the officials liked Josephine, and wished her to remain, for they realised, as Talleyrand said, that "she is gentle and good, she has the art of pacifying him [Napoleon], she can put herself in the place of others. She is a refuge to us in a thousand occasions. If a princess arrives here, you will see the Emperor quarrel with all his court and we will all be crushed." Indeed, Josephine was so kind and good, that, even in the midst of these divorce perplexities, and while she was mourning for her mother, who had just died at Martinique, she never forgot the comfort of others. She even showed her solicitude for her husband's soldiers, by refusing to allow them to mount guard at night before her door at Fontainebleau, saying: "These brave soldiers have enough to suffer from the hardships of war when on the battlefield. In my service they must rest. I don't wish them to spend any sleepless nights here."

The depression of Hortense's and Josephine's spirits, and his own uncertainty regarding the divorce, made the Emperor leave Fontainebleau without regret, and resolve to journey alone to Italy, in spite of the fact that Josephine longed to go thither to see her son and new granddaughter. But, although not averse to monopolising all the attention and adulation on this journey, Napoleon wrote his wife frequent duty letters, "such as are written at fifty," to use his own expression, although he was then only forty years of age.



During that journey, he had an interview with his still recalcitrant brother Lucien, who again not only refused to part with his wife, but showed all his old animosity for Josephine, by retorting pointedly to one of Napoleon's contemptuous remarks: "At least my woman of gallantry is young and handsome!" This taunt so angered the Emperor that he broke his watch, crying: "I could crush you as I crush this bauble; but you are my brother, go!"

Josephine, meantime, had returned to Paris to welcome the Old Guard home from the war. She was also present at the military school celebration; but although as gracious and affable as ever, such pageants had lost many of their charms, for she fancied each might be her last.

On returning from his journey, at nine o'clock in the evening on the 1st of January, 1808, Napoleon affectionately returned Josephine's good wishes; but he no longer lived on the same intimate footing with her as of yore, and seldom entered her apartments. Still, he was, as a rule, kind and pleasant, and greatly enjoyed the masked balls which he and Josephine frequently attended. She never failed to recognise him there, and often managed to mystify him, laughing merrily when he remarked one day: "Do you know, gentlemen, that I was regularly discovered by a young lady who seemed an accomplished intriguer, and yet, would you believe it, I could never recognise the flirt!"

But even in the midst of her happiest hours and most peaceful amusements, the divorce spectre would suddenly rise, for now and again Napoleon himself mentioned it, saying: "What a glorious sacrifice you can make, not only to me, but to our empire!" Still, when he was ill or depressed, no one could comfort or nurse him so



acceptably as Josephine, whom he then clung to with tears, crying: "No, my poor Josephine, I shall never be able to part with you!"

One of these hysterical demonstrations occurring one day after she was all dressed for a ball, the Empress was forced to give up attending it so as to minister to him. However, the impending divorce might have been consummated sooner, had not affairs in Spain suddenly required all Napoleon's presence further south. He therefore set out for Bayonne, bidding Josephine join him on the way, although this time she would fain have remained in Paris until her daughter's third confinement was safely over. Forced to leave before this event, Josephine heard of the birth of her grandson — the future Napoleon III. — at Bordeaux, where these good tidings helped to make her sojourn pleasant. From thence, she proceeded to Bayonne, whither Napoleon had preceded her, and where he used her as an unconscious tool, while he despoiled the Spanish king of his throne, which he bestowed upon his brother Joseph.

While Napoleon discussed politics with the inefficient King, Josephine amused the Queen by talking dress and fashions, and lavishing dainty gifts upon her. But when she discovered the real motive of her husband's apparent kindliness, she was greatly dismayed, and although she dared offer no open remonstrance, her common-sense plainly told her that the time would come when Napoleon's overweening ambition would cause his downfall.

After their sojourn at Bayonne, their Imperial Majesties visited other great cities in southern and western France, returning to St. Cloud for the imperial birthday festivities. A brief period of comparative inaction now ensued, before the Emperor set out alone for Erfurth,



to meet his new ally, the Russian Emperor, and discuss important plans with him.

During this time the Emperor was in such a genial mood that on the eve of his journey he indulged in what was to prove his last game of prisoner's base, calling out servants with torches so that the game might be finished in spite of the gathering darkness. But although Josephine would have liked to accompany him, he would not take her with him on this voyage, for, as she shrewdly suspected, one of the questions to be discussed was that of his divorce and remarriage with the eldest sister of the Czar. His letters, however, made no mention of the latter fact; but instead, he posed in them as an elderly man, saying: "The Emperor Alexander dances, but I do not. Forty is forty."

The brilliant assembly at Erfurth, however, soon dispersed, and Napoleon, after a brief stay in Paris, hastened on to Spain, returning thence only in January, 1809, to set out soon after on a new Austrian campaign. Once more, Josephine accompanied him as far as Strasburg, taking up her abode there as Regent, with Cambacérès as main assistant, and parting there from the husband who, in one sense, was never to belong to her again. This sojourn in Strasburg was enlivened by visits from Hortense and Stéphanie, and by letters from Napoleon, giving minute instructions and brief reports of his doings and health. But this was, on the whole, a sorrowful time for Josephine, for aside from the already mentioned causes of worry and grief, she greatly disapproved of the Emperor's policy, and felt that his unjust treatment of the Pope would necessarily be punished. All these anxieties so preyed upon her health, that she had to undergo a course of treatment at Plombières before returning to Malmaison, where her flowers were thriving, and



where no less than one hundred and eighty-four different species, unknown to France, had already bloomed for the first time.

The Emperor's cold letters made Josephine dread his return, for she knew they heralded the end; but his last missive again revived all her hopes, and left her entirely unprepared for what was coming. Napoleon wrote from Nymphenberg: "I am here since yesterday, in good health, and won't leave till to-morrow. I will stop one day at Stuttgart. You will be warned of my arrival at Fontainebleau twenty-four hours in advance; I rejoice at the prospect of seeing you, and await that moment with impatience. I embrace you. Wholly yours."

This transformed Josephine's despondent mood to one of joyful anticipation, and she anxiously awaited the arrival of the courier to set out for Fontainebleau, where she fancied a joyful reunion would yet take place. Either by accident, or through design, Napoleon travelled so rapidly that he overtook his own courier at the gates of Fontainebleau, and, sending him on to summon Josephine, entered the palace where so many important events in his life were still to occur. There, he was joined by Cambacérès, to whom he immediately gave his instructions for the coming divorce, which he now declared indispensable. He wished the statement clearly made that he and the Empress separated by mutual consent for the sake of France, arranged that Josephine should retain her title, rank next to the future Empress, have Malmaison, the Elysée, and Navarre as abodes, receive a million francs income, all her debts being paid, and added: "I wish ever to keep her near me as my best and most affectionate friend."

This matter had scarcely been settled, when the Emperor heard a carriage drive up, and thinking it



brought Josephine, he ran down to open the door. But when he found it only contained some of her attendants, he withdrew displeased to his study, and when Josephine arrived a few minutes later, bent so closely over his work that he seemed absorbed in that only. Struck to the heart at the Emperor's failure to meet and welcome her at the door, as usual after a long absence, Josephine entered his study with much trepidation, and when he coldly remarked: "Ah! you have come, madame? It is well, for I was about to start for St. Cloud," tears sprang to her eyes. Still these tokens of feeling, and her explanation of the delay, mollified the Emperor's wrath to such an extent that he soon consented to kiss her, acknowledged that he had been hasty, and gently dismissed her to prepare for their tête-à-tête meal.

With the utmost despatch, Josephine donned a white satin gown all trimmed with swansdown, twined bluets and silver wheat in her hair, — a toilet which proved so becoming that her lord and master deigned to appear pleased, and became quite genial. But Josephine soon discovered that her worst presentiments were to be justified, for the passage establishing private communication between their rooms had already been closed by his order. Napoleon, who liked to depute all disagreeable tasks to others, decided to make Josephine's children break the news of the divorce to her, and therefore summoned them both to court. Meantime, he tried to pretend that all was just as usual, surrounded himself with august guests, and gave hunting parties as long as they remained at Fontainebleau. But he carefully avoided being alone with his wife, and when they journeyed back to Paris, made the trip on horseback, rather than be shut up in the carriage alone with her, where she might perchance embarrass him by inconvenient questions.



All these manœuvres did not escape Josephine's keen perception; but she still hoped that the divorce would be deferred until the royalties visiting in Paris had departed. Napoleon, however, was not inclined to brook further delay, for his decision was made, and as Hortense flatly refused to be his intermediary, he suddenly resolved to break the news to Josephine himself. It was well he did so, for by the 30th of November the situation had become unbearable, and the tête-à-tête meals silent and constrained. At dinner, on that day, Josephine wore a big white poke to conceal the tears which, in spite of all her efforts at self-control, coursed down her cheeks throughout the meal. The Emperor himself broke the silence only once, to ask an attendant a question concerning the weather, and when he and Josephine passed into the drawing-room, where they generally took coffee, he abruptly began:

"Josephine, my good Josephine, you know how I have loved you," and then, gazing into her grief-stricken face, he continued: "Josephine, my destiny is more powerful than my will, my dearest affections must be sacrificed to the interests of France!"

This was enough; poor Josephine understood that the die had been cast, and, falling to the floor, she lay there in a semi-conscious state, moaning from time to time: "No, no, I cannot survive it!" Napoleon, meantime, quickly opened the door into the neighbouring room, and, calling in the Prefect of the Palace, bade him carry the Empress down to her room by the private staircase, so that she might receive the care her condition required. But as the Prefect feared to trip and fall in the narrow stairway, the Emperor had to summon his secretary also, who held a light while Napoleon and the Prefect bore Josephine away.



JOSEPHINE'S BEDROOM AT FONTAINEBLEAU.





Josephine

When they had gently laid her down upon her bed, summoned her women, and seen the first signs of returning consciousness, the Emperor dragged the Prefect away, and in his perturbation confided his secret to him, saying: "The interests of France and of my dynasty have wrung my heart; divorce has become an imperative duty. I am all the more grieved by the scene which Josephine has just made, as Hortense must have told her, already three days ago, of the unhappy obligation which condemns me to part with her. I pity her from the depths of my heart; but I thought her stronger-minded than that, and was not prepared for such a paroxysm of grief."

After sending for the doctor, Cambacérès, and Fouché, Napoleon had an interview with Hortense, in which he coldly informed her that, his mind being fully made up concerning the divorce, tears and lamentations would prove of no avail. Hurt by his tone, Hortense haughtily retorted that he would be troubled by no such demonstrations on their part, adding: "The Empress will most assuredly submit to your wishes. She will descend from the throne, as she ascended it, at your request. Her children, content to lay aside a greatness which has never made them happy, will willingly consecrate their lives to the consolation of the best and tenderest of mothers."

Reassured concerning the outcome of the affair, Napoleon now allowed his stepdaughter to see his undoubted grief at parting with Josephine. He implored her not to forsake him, but to remain with him, were it only for the sake of her children, whose future he promised to assure, and sadly added: "However great this cruel sacrifice may be for both parties, we must carry it out with the dignity which circumstances require."



The last night of November was equally troubled for both their Imperial Majesties, although spent apart; but while Napoleon kept his own counsel after the first emotions were passed, Josephine confided her sorrows to all her ladies, uttering no reproaches, but bewailing her sad fate, and finding no consolation save in the thought that the separation grieved Napoleon also. This conviction, strengthened by all she saw and heard, and the tender sympathy of Hortense and of all her household, proved the Empress' main support during the ensuing fortnight, in which, in spite of all that had occurred, she kept hoping that Napoleon might still retract his decision. But although the coming event was known to so many persons within the Palace, it was not yet openly discussed, and, as far as the royal guests could perceive, all went on as before. However broken-hearted, Josephine had to appear in public as usual, and play the part assigned her, gracing a *Te Deum* at Notre Dame, the opening of the Legislative Assembly, a gala dinner, and a huge ball. At the latter entertainment, the Emperor ordered that she should no longer be met at the door of the City Hall as usual; and the omission of this ceremony, although the officials thoughtfully tried to disguise it as much as possible, inflicted a cruel stab upon Josephine's sensitive heart. She felt it so keenly that she lacked the courage to appear at the next court function, and was also absent from the state reception in the throne room on the 10th. Her last public appearance was at a fête at Gros Bois on the 12th of December, and, as Napoleon had announced that he meant to enjoy himself, every one tried to contribute to the gaiety of the occasion. But the sight of Josephine's gentle, woebegone face checked all hilarity, and the entertainment proved a failure as far as real enjoyment was concerned.

Meantime, Eugene had arrived in Paris, and, learning from Hortense how matters stood, offered to resign all to follow his mother. But both she and Napoleon insisted upon his retaining the viceroyalty of Italy, the Emperor telling him plainly that he depended upon him to take care of the longed-for son and "make a man of him" should he (Napoleon) be unable to do so himself. Thus appealed to by beings almost equally dear, Eugene yielded; but, keenly alive to his mother's suffering, tactfully advised Napoleon to spare her as much pain as possible by acting promptly. Thus adjured, Napoleon called a family council at nine P. M. in the Grand Salon of the Tuileries, on Friday, December 15, 1809. It consisted of his mother; Louis, Jerome, and Murat, with their wives; the Queen of Spain, Prince Eugene, Cambacérès, and Count Regnault de St. Jean d'Angély. When all were assembled, Napoleon entered the room, leading Josephine by the hand, and producing a paper, read the following statement with tears in his eyes: —

"My cousin, Prince Archchancellor, I sent you a sealed letter to-day, bidding you come here, so that I might inform you of a resolve made by me and by the Empress, my very dear wife. I am very glad that the kings, queens, and princesses, my brothers, sisters, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, and my stepson, — who has become my son by adoption, — as well as my mother, should hear what I have to tell you.

"The policy of my kingdom, the interests and needs of all my people — which have constantly guided all my actions — demand that I leave the throne, upon which Providence has seated me, to children who will inherit my love for my people. For several years past, I have abandoned all hope of having children by my marriage with my well-beloved wife, the Empress Josephine. It



is that fact which compels me to sacrifice my dearest affections, to heed nothing but the welfare of the state, and to ask for the dissolution of my marriage.

"Having reached the age of forty, I can still cherish the hope of living long enough to train in my ways and modes of thought the children which Providence may yet vouchsafe me. God knows what pangs such a resolve has cost me, but no sacrifice is above my courage, when it is clearly demonstrated to me that it will tend to the welfare of France. I must add that, far from ever having any cause of complaint, I can only praise the love and devotion of my dearly beloved wife. She has embellished fifteen years of my life, and the recollection of these years will ever be engraved in my heart. Crowned by my hand, I wish her to retain the rank and title of Empress, but I am desirous, above all, that she should never doubt my feelings for her, and that she should ever consider me her best and dearest friend."

This speech, delivered with moving eloquence, so overcame poor Josephine, that she vainly tried to read the paper she held, — which she finally handed to Count Regnault de St. Jean d'Angély, who read as follows:

"With the permission of my august and beloved spouse, I must declare that, as I can no longer cherish any hope of having children to satisfy the demands of his policy and the interests of France, I pride myself upon giving him the greatest proof of love and self-sacrifice that has ever been given on earth. I owe everything to his affection, his hand crowned me, and on this throne I have received naught but tokens of love and devotion from the French people. I believe I am proving my gratitude for all these sentiments, by consenting to the dissolution of a marriage, which is henceforth considered an obstacle to the welfare of France, and which



THE DIVORCE OF JOSEPHINE, 1809.
Schopin.



deprives it of the happiness of being some day governed by the offspring of the great man, whom Providence has so evidently called to efface the harm done by a fearful revolution, and to restore the altar, throne, and social order. But the dissolution of my marriage will in nowise change the feelings of my heart. The Emperor will ever have in me his best friend. I know what violence this deed, enforced by his policy and by such weighty interests, does to his heart, but we both glory in the sacrifice we are making to the welfare of our country."

Cambacérès, who had drawn up the necessary paper, handed the pen to Napoleon, who signed without a word. Then Josephine, supported by Hortense, who, according to different accounts, was garbed in black or white satin like her mother, advanced to sign in her turn. The tension of this moment was so great that Eugene fainted; but Napoleon gently kissed his wife and, helped by Hortense, led her back to her apartments, whither Eugene had been carried, and where she was now left to the care of her children and attendants.

That night, after the Emperor had gone to bed, his door was suddenly opened, and after a moment's hesitation, Josephine rushed to his bedside and, sobbing convulsively, clasped both arms around his neck. Signing to his servant to leave them alone together, Napoleon drew Josephine to his heart, and after they had spent some time weeping in each other's arms, he finally said: "Come, my good Josephine, be more reasonable. Come, be brave, be brave, I will always be your friend."

After they had thus taken affectionate leave of each other, and the Empress had gone, a servant found Napoleon buried in the bed-clothes, evidently a prey to violent grief. But no other word was spoken that night, al-



though the Emperor could not sleep, and lay still, watching for the dawn, which was to herald their final separation. But all was bustle and confusion in Josephine's apartments, where her women prepared for immediate departure, while Hortense and Eugene lavished consolations upon their unhappy mother. At eleven, Prince Eugene had to leave the Empress to attend a Senate meeting, where Napoleon's and Josephine's papers were again read. Then the formal request for a divorce was submitted to the Senate, and, after a dignified speech by Regnault de St. Jean d'Angély, Eugene expressed his own and his family's gratitude to the Emperor, their conviction that heirs of his body were indispensable to the interests of France, and concluded by saying that the tears which this sacrifice had wrung from the Emperor, sufficed for his mother's glory.

The matter was voted upon that self-same day, and the divorce pronounced by eighty votes against seven. The Senate not only decreed that the ex-Empress should be allowed two million francs annual income, but voted the following flattering address:

"Madame, Your Imperial and Royal Majesty has just made the greatest of sacrifices to France. History will for ever bear it in mind. The august wife of the greatest of monarchs could not associate herself to his immortal glory by a more heroic act of self-sacrifice. The French have long revered your virtues, madame, they prize the touching kindness which inspires all your words as it directs all your deeds. France will admire your sublime self-sacrifice, and will award to your Imperial and Royal Majesty the undying homage of its gratitude, love, and respect."

At four o'clock that afternoon, the Emperor suddenly seized his hat, and bidding his secretary follow him, went

rapidly down the private staircase to Josephine's apartment. Hearing her husband enter, Josephine fell upon his neck, sobbing convulsively. He kissed her several times, then, seeing she had fainted, placed her upon the lounge, and bidding his secretary, Méneval, remain with her until he could bring tidings of her recovery, passed hastily out of the palace and drove off to the Trianon, where he had decided to spend the first days of his widowerhood.

Josephine, upon recovering her senses under the tender ministrations of her attendants, seized Méneval's hands, crying: "Tell the Emperor not to forget me. Assure him of an affection which will endure whatever happens. Promise to give me news of him as soon as you reach the Trianon, and see that he writes to me." But, when the secretary had gone, she had to prepare to leave the palace in her turn. Clad in sombre garments, and closely veiled, she passed slowly out to her carriage, her sobs preventing her speaking a word of farewell to the sorrowing attendants, who had assembled to show their beloved mistress, for the last time, every token of loving and respectful sympathy.

Escorted by Hortense and Eugene, Josephine left the palace of the Tuileries and drove to Malmaison, which seemed cheerless enough, for the rain was falling and the ground was all strewn with dead leaves. The first hours spent at Malmaison were most trying, for the Empress constantly spoke of Napoleon, weeping profusely meanwhile. But, in spite of her sorrow, she uttered no word of reproach against her husband, and seemed touchingly grateful when she received the few lines he sent her from the Trianon. An almost sleepless night was followed by another equally mournful day, although Josephine received numerous visitors;



for the courtiers, knowing such an act of deference would please the Emperor, crowded around the Empress with even more respect than usual. Josephine, ever sociable and kindly, received them with all her customary gentleness, concealing the ravages of grief under a broad-brimmed bonnet. She was evidently touched by all these tokens of love and sympathy, and the official newspaper having made the divorce public, rejoiced to see how universally she was regretted.

On the 18th of December, Napoleon made his first call upon his divorced wife, who, making a great effort, received him with apparent calm. They met like ordinary acquaintances, shaking hands, and after a brief, constrained conversation in the presence of witnesses, parted again in the same formal way. But that evening Napoleon wrote an affectionate letter to Josephine, assuring her of his undying affection, and imploring her to be brave and happy. This tender epistle was followed by others, so full of solicitude, that Madame de Rémusat begged her husband to prevail upon Napoleon to moderate the expression of his love and regret, for the sake of the unhappy wife who could not bear such an emotional strain.

The following Sunday brought another brief call from Napoleon, and as the Empress received him formally at the door, he begged her to accompany him for a little walk. They strolled about together, and sat for awhile side by side on a garden bench; but the proprieties were carefully observed, for they constantly remained in full view of the drawing-room, where the court ladies and gentlemen had meantime assembled. This was a doubly happy day for Josephine, because Napoleon invited her to visit him at Trianon on the morrow. There, he detained her to dinner, treating her with such kindly



ease that the tie between them seemed stronger than ever. This Christmas dinner, — the last meal they were ever to take together, — therefore proved quite happy to Josephine; but when Napoleon wrote on the morrow that he had returned to the Tuileries, where he felt very lonely, she again wept bitter tears, because she no longer possessed the privilege of hastening thither to comfort him.

Although his letters now played a little less ruthlessly with her tender sensibilities, they continued quite frequent and sympathetic, urging her to see her friends as much as possible, and visit her plants. Besides he gave her other tokens of affectionate interest, for, after his visit on the 7th of January, he allowed her considerable sums for improvements and new furnishings at Malmaison, again paid her debts, and announced that he had ordered a magnificent set of dishes for her use. He also arranged that she should not be neglected, for at his first levée he asked sundry of his officers when they had last seen the Empress, and urged them all to visit her often. Such requests were equivalent to commands, so the road to Malmaison was well travelled, in spite of the inclement winter weather, and none could help commenting upon Josephine's gentle resignation, and her utter devotion to the man whose rooms she preserved just as he had left them, carefully dusting them with her own hands.

The ex-Empress was, however, an old story; the most interesting topic of conversation being, of course, the coming sovereign. Josephine's civil and religious marriages had both been annulled: the former by the Senate, as we have seen, and the latter by the metropolitan clergy, who now declared the marriage in the Tuileries, on the eve of the coronation, invalid, because



Napoleon had yielded only to necessity, and because the parish priest had not witnessed the ceremony. The religious marriage was broken under this specious pretext, and through the metropolitan clergy, only because Napoleon knew it would be useless to apply to the Pope.

Hitherto, Josephine's position had been comparatively easy to bear, for she was surrounded by her children and friends, visited by the Emperor, and received innumerable tokens of respect and sympathy. Besides, there was solace in the thought that the Emperor was lonely and missed her, for as yet no one had come to take the place she had left vacant. She knew, however, that this state of affairs could not endure, and, strange to relate, began to take a lively interest in the discussions concerning a new marriage.

Even before the announcement of the divorce, Napoleon had taken measures to secure a Russian princess; but Josephine so dreaded his marriage to a person of different religion, that she confided to Madame de Metternich that they were all in favour of an Austrian alliance, and felt sure the Emperor would prefer it too, were he only sure his suit would be accepted at Vienna. Madame de Metternich immediately wrote to her husband, who cleverly negotiated this alliance. The Emperor, meantime, held a council in the Tuileries, on the 21st of January, where he artfully made it appear that he could have his pick among the marriageable princesses, but considered an Austrian alliance best for the good of the country. All naturally coincided in this decided opinion, and as few difficulties were encountered, the marriage contract was signed at the Tuileries, on the 7th of February, 1810.

Malmaison had proved so cold and uncomfortable, that Josephine had obtained Napoleon's permission to



remove to the Elysée at the end of January. There, she took leave of Eugene, who went back to Italy, whence he was soon summoned to return for the wedding of Napoleon and Marie Louise. Josephine, little suspecting how soon her son would come back, felt his departure deeply; still, she was a little less lonely in the capital than at Malmaison, although she did not see the Emperor as frequently as she had hoped, and their interviews grew more and more constrained. The coming Empress and wedding festivities were the theme of all conversations, a subject naturally painful to Josephine, who was glad to wend her way back to Malmaison in the beginning of March. She was then so exhausted by past emotions that she said: "It seems to me sometimes that I am dead, and that there remains to me only a vague faculty of feeling that I no longer exist."

Josephine, however, remained a very short time at Malmaison. This place was so near Paris, that fearing the echoes of the wedding festivities would annoy her, Napoleon cleverly suggested she should visit her castle at Navarre, near Evreux. Josephine obeyed, although reluctant to go so far away from her children, whose presence was required at the wedding. There, Hortense helped carry the new Empress' train, and it is no wonder if her tears did drop upon the gorgeous fabric, as rumour declares, for she must have been vividly reminded of the coronation service where she had performed a similar office for her beloved mother. Eugene, too, witnessed the ceremony with secret pangs, and as soon as the festivities were over, hastened off to Navarre. There he found his mother a prey to great depression, and almost blind from the tears which had flowed so persistently during the last few months. In fact, her



thoughts were constantly with her rival, and as one attendant said: "One must be a woman and put one's self in the Empress' place to understand all she felt!"

But, in spite of neglect, — the inevitable concomitant of her position, — and small slights which she felt very keenly, Josephine tried to be as brave as she could, and sought distraction in planning improvements in her new and by no means comfortable home. Still, her hard situation was made even more cruel by malicious reports from court, stating that the new Empress was so jealous that Josephine would soon be deprived of her title, and what she dreaded most of all, exiled from France.

The discomfort of her present abode and an ardent wish to draw nearer Paris made Josephine crave Napoleon's permission to return to Malmaison, a favour which he granted officially, and which she acknowledged in a letter wherein she addressed the Emperor as a vassal, and humbly begged for some token of his continued regard. This touching missive called forth a friendly answer from Compiègne, where Napoleon was concluding his honeymoon, in which he gently chided her for addressing him in such a formal way, assured her his sentiments were quite unchanged, and concluded with the words: "I leave you to judge which one of us is the most friendly, you or I. Good-bye, my dear, keep well and be just to me and to yourself."

This letter not only put an end to Josephine's stiff formality, but enabled her henceforth to write to him almost as freely as before. Her return to Malmaison was also less painful than she expected, for Napoleon had already departed with Marie Louise, and, as the court was deserted, the ex-Empress had no dearth of company. Besides, she was busy preparing to visit some mineral baths, and as the Emperor preferred that she should not

frequent any place where they had been seen together, she went to Aix in Savoy, instead of Aix-la-Chapelle. It was almost on the eve of her departure for that place, that she had the mingled pain and pleasure of another brief but friendly visit from Napoleon, the first since his second marriage.

Josephine was joined at Aix by Hortense, who had parted with her husband for ever, Napoleon acquitting her from all blame, and promising her his protection. But Hortense was so sad that her society would have greatly depressed Josephine, had they not both been cheered by the presence of the young Count of Flahaut, who soon fell deeply in love with the younger woman. She returned his affections, and deeming herself free from all other ties, although no divorce had been pronounced, entered into a secret connection with him a few months later. They had a son, born in October, 1811, who was brought up by his paternal grandmother, and who subsequently became a prominent figure at the court of his half-brother, Napoleon III., where he was known as the Duke de Morny.

While at Aix, Josephine also received a visit from Eugene, and hearing his wife was too delicate to travel more than necessary, went with him to see her at Geneva. While there, she made an excursion on Lake Bourget, where, owing to a sudden squall, she found herself in danger of drowning in a very small lake, which, Napoleon said, "would have been a dreadful fate for a dweller of the Ocean Islands." His letters, Josephine's greatest pleasure, grew less and less frequent, however, as time went on, and Josephine sadly foresaw the moment when they would cease entirely.

After spending nearly two months in Switzerland, where she greatly enjoyed the beauties of Nature, and made an



excursion on the Mer de Glace at Chamounix, Josephine asked Napoleon's permission to return to the Elysée or Malmaison. He suggested that she should rather visit her son in Italy; but as he offered no objection to her living at Navarre, she elected to spend the winter there instead. The Emperor refused Josephine's request to dwell near Paris, only because Marie Louise was very jealous, and he was reluctant to annoy her now that she was in an interesting condition. Josephine, therefore, only stopped twenty-four hours at Malmaison, where the Emperor sent his servant Constant, saying: "Tell the Empress I am well and that I desire her to be happy." This confidential servant was, thenceforth, a trusted messenger between them, for he was equally devoted to them both, and could answer all the questions either cared to ask.

This jealousy on the part of Marie Louise was both flattering and annoying to Josephine, for while it tickled her vanity that a wife of eighteen should consider her a dangerous rival, she would fain have made friends with her successor so as to see her former husband more frequently, and instruct the new wife how best to please him and minister to his comfort. Napoleon, too, would have liked to see these two women friends; but Marie Louise stubbornly resisted all his efforts to bring them together, wept whenever the Emperor mentioned Josephine's name, and showed so great an aversion to her presence in the neighbourhood, that he soon recognised the futility of trying to induce them to be friends.

Josephine's winter at Navarre was very cheerless, in spite of the society of devoted friends, who tried to enliven her by walks, drives, music, fancy-work, reading, plays, and animated conversation. Josephine, grateful for their efforts, strove to shake off her depression and take



an interest in various charitable institutions which she founded. She also tried to give pleasure to her friends by organising little parties, among others a New Year's Day lottery, where, by a clever arrangement, each guest received a gift chosen by the ex-Empress with particular regard to the recipient's tastes or needs.

Josephine was loved at Navarre, as everywhere else, so her birthday on the 19th of March was celebrated with as much rejoicing as if she had still been on the throne. Not only did the common people present her with their choicest flowers on this occasion, but her attendants surprised her with a pleasant entertainment, little suspecting that her rival was even then in the throes of childbirth, and the Paris churches full of devout people praying for the safe advent of the long-desired heir.

The news of the birth of the King of Rome was, however, published far and wide by salvos of artillery and by the signal telegraph, so it soon reached Josephine at Navarre, where she warmly exclaimed: "The Emperor must be very happy, and I, too, rejoice over his happiness, rejoice to see the wishes of the French fulfilled at last! I am reaping the fruit of my painful sacrifice, since it insures the prosperity of France. I regret being so far away from Paris. If I were at Malmaison I would have frequent and speedy tidings."

But, although tears dimmed her eyes while she spoke, she immediately began to plan how they could celebrate the great event in the most suitable way, and, having given the necessary orders, wrote a long letter to the Emperor to congratulate him upon the birth of a son.

Eugene, who had been summoned to Paris to be one of the required official witnesses of the birth of the Emperor's heir, left immediately after the event for



Navarre, and the Emperor said: "You are going to see your mother, Eugene; tell her that I am sure she will rejoice more than any one else over my happiness. I would already have written to her, had I not been absorbed by the pleasure of gazing at my son. I tear myself away from him only for indispensable duties. But this evening I will fulfil the sweetest of all, by writing to Josephine."

True to that promise, he wrote to Josephine, sending the following lines by a special messenger: "My dear, I have received your letter, and thank you. My son is large and very healthy. I hope he will thrive. He has my chest, my mouth, and my eyes. I trust he will be equal to his destiny. I am always well pleased with Eugene, who has never caused me any sorrow." This letter, wherein her son was mentioned as affectionately as his own, overjoyed Josephine, who rewarded the messenger by giving him a magnificent diamond ring. According to other authorities, however, Napoleon's letter concluded with the still more flattering sentence: "This infant, in concert with our Eugene, will consolidate my happiness and that of France."

At the ball given at Navarre in honour of the newborn King of Rome, Josephine again decked herself in a beautiful gown, all shot with silver, wore a magnificent diadem, and did the honours of the evening with her wonted grace and affability, thinking of nothing but the entertainment of her guests. Besides, her sojourn in this country residence during the remainder of that spring and summer was enlivened by frequent visits from Eugene, who enjoyed rural life, and was very glad to cast aside all etiquette, playfully remarking: "'T is a hard trade, that of king, when one has not been brought up to it!"

Although many people fancied that Marie Louise



would cease to be jealous of Josephine now that she was the mother of the Emperor's heir, she still refused to see her on her return to Malmaison in September. There the ex-Empress was happy in revisiting her old haunts, and delighted in the company of her two grandsons, who often stayed with her, and whom she fairly idolised.

To gratify her oft-expressed wish, the Emperor also arranged that she should see the King of Rome at the Trianon. This visit was kept secret, however, as any mention of Josephine was sure to produce a fit of sulkiness on the part of the child's mother. It was so successful, however, that it seems to have been renewed from time to time, until the child was old enough to speak. He was evidently fascinated by Josephine, and once begged her to come and live with him. When she sadly answered that she could not do so, he wonderingly inquired: "Why not, since both papa and I wish it?"

Josephine celebrated her birthday at Malmaison with her daughter and grandsons, and shortly after received Napoleon's last visit before his fatal Russian campaign. Hearing her son was to take part in this expedition, Josephine now journeyed to Milan, so as to be present at her daughter-in-law's fourth confinement. This visit, however joyful otherwise, proved full of sad reminiscences for Josephine, who was not sorry to leave for Aix in Savoy. There she remained some time, and then visited the little castle of Prégny near Geneva, which she purchased for the sake of its fine view of Mont Blanc.

On arriving at Malmaison in October, just after the Malet conspiracy, she was unpleasantly impressed by the general atmosphere of discontent and failure, which seemed so different from anything she had hitherto



known. But although it roused some apprehensions in her heart, she was greatly reassured when Hortense told her that she had seen all the Emperor's letters to Marie Louise, wherein he spoke most encouragingly of their situation, and did not seem at all dismayed by the disasters of the Russian campaign.

Still, news of death, sickness, and disaster constantly reached her by indirect means, and such tidings, coupled with a dearth of letters from the Emperor or from Eugene, gradually opened her eyes to the truth, and showed her plainly that the Emperor was no longer considered infallible as of old, nor worshipped as a god. She felt, however, that his presence might still retrieve everything, and was, therefore, greatly relieved when she heard that he had returned, in the middle of the night, on the 18th of December.

The year 1813 beginning on a Friday, the superstitious Josephine began to anticipate double misfortunes, which soon came thick and fast. Not only were the worst tidings from Russia confirmed, but new war clouds loomed up on the horizon. Indeed, the only bright spot was Eugene's promotion to the chief command of the absent army. But although many people wore mourning, the Emperor wished the capital to appear as gay as usual, and made Hortense entertain, notwithstanding her poor health, which drove her to Aix in Savoy early in the summer. She left her children with Josephine, and journeyed thither with a friend, who, missing her footing, fell into a deep chasm and was drowned in a mountain stream. This sad accident so affected Hortense's already shattered nerves, that Josephine grew very anxious about her, as well as about Napoleon, who, after the victories of Lützen, Bauzen, and Dresden, suffered an awful defeat at Leipzig.

A few days after his return from this disastrous campaign, Napoleon sent his secretary to Josephine, who wept with pity when told that the Emperor was so worried and overworked, that he scarcely allowed himself three hours of sleep. In fact, as the secretary said, Napoleon was so weary physically, that at times even *his* mental energy flagged, and he no longer showed his former confidence and promptness of decision. But while many were already preparing to desert him, others rallied more closely around him, and among them Louis Bonaparte. This act of brotherly loyalty greatly pleased both Josephine and Hortense, although the latter was now separated from her hypochondriac husband for ever.

Just before beginning his campaign against the invaders, Napoleon paid his last visit to Josephine at Malmaison. On this occasion they wept together, and the Emperor bitterly cried: "Ah! I have been as fortunate as ever was man on the face of this earth; but in this hour, when a storm is gathering over my head, I have not, oh, Josephine, in the wide world, any but you whom I can wholly trust!" This confession, on the part of so confident a man as Napoleon, increased Josephine's alarms to such an extent that her health suffered greatly, and one of her ladies, describing her state of anxiety at this time, says: "I have seen her face flush or pale, her eyes shine or grow dim, as each day's mail brought sad or reassuring news. I myself have witnessed the disconsolate sight of her sleepless nights, her terrible dreams. I have seen her tears flow, and mine have mingled with them. I have seen her Majesty spend whole days buried in mournful thoughts."

No wonder poor Josephine was sad, for things were going from bad to worse, and even Napoleon's letters were far from reassuring, for he was so discouraged

that he wrote from Brienne: "To me death would now be a blessing. But I would fain once more see Josephine!"

The news from Paris was equally disquieting, and when Marie Louise prepared to leave the capital for Blois, Hortense advised Josephine to retire to Navarre. The same day, therefore, both Empresses left home, fleeing from the enemy; but while Marie Louise was accompanied by her son and followed by many courtiers, Josephine was comparatively alone. She was so reluctant to leave at all, that sights and sounds of battle were already perceptible on all sides when she entered her carriage. A false alarm that the Cossacks were coming caused great terror to her and to her attendants, and when it was over she sadly cried: "Surely, surely Napoleon is ignorant of what is passing within sight of the gates of Paris; or if he knows, how cruel must be the thoughts which now agitate his breast!"

Hortense, meantime, remained in Paris as long as possible, withdrawing to the Trianon only at the last minute, and listening from there to the sounds of the battle of Paris. It was only when the cannonading ceased, and the city surrendered, that she went on to Navarre to join her mother. Four days after her arrival there, a messenger came in the middle of the night, to announce Napoleon's abdication; but Josephine would not believe his tidings, and interrupted him several times, crying: "The Emperor lives; repeat it to me!" When fully convinced that Napoleon was still alive, but was to be banished to Elba, she rose in haste and ran half-dressed to Hortense's apartment, saying: "Ah, Hortense! how unhappy he must be! What! They wish to confine him in the island of Elba? If it were not for his wife, I would go and shut myself up there with him. It is

now that it would be sweet to me to be with him, to take half his griefs. No, I have never suffered so much from the divorce as now."

Hortense, deeming it impossible for any Bonaparte to remain in France, now began speedy preparations to remove with her children to Martinique; but, considering Marie Louise most to be pitied under the present circumstances, went first to visit her at Rambouillet, and offer any consolation in her power. To her surprise, however, she was very coldly received, and soon after dismissed with the remark: "My father is coming, your presence might prove importunate." The fact was that Hortense had arrived too late, for Marie Louise had already fallen back into the dependence and subjection of her early girlhood, and ceasing to be Empress of France had become once more an Austrian archduchess.

Hortense, therefore, returned to Navarre, where news was anxiously expected, and where Josephine little dreamt that the man she still loved, and would have unhesitatingly followed to Elba, had just attempted to commit suicide. Even in the midst of the severest pains inflicted by poison, he gave a thought to her, saying to an attendant: "Let Josephine know that I thought of her before quitting life."

Josephine, who had heard of him on the 8th, longed to visit him at Fontainebleau, like the faithful Madame Walewska; and had she been in Marie Louise's place, she would undoubtedly have defied everybody, driving through Paris in state to join him openly and proudly. Four days before his departure for Elba, Napoleon wrote that he meant to spend his time henceforth in writing history, adding: —

I have heaped benefits upon millions of ingrates, and they have all betrayed me; yes, all! I except from this number



the good Eugene, so worthy of you and of me. Adieu, my dear Josephine. Be resigned as I am, and never forget him who never forgets and will never forget you. Farewell, Josephine.

(Signed) NAPOLEON.

P. S. I expect to hear from you at Elba. I am not very well.

Napoleon set out for Elba on the 20th of April, 1814, and reached his new abode on the 4th of May. Marie Louise left France three days later, to wend her way toward Vienna; while Josephine returned to Malmaison before the end of the month, summoned thither by the allied Powers, who showed her and her children every mark of respect.

It was from Malmaison that Josephine wrote Napoleon a long letter, wherein she expressed her sympathy in his sorrow over the defection of his marshals, and parting with his faithful soldiers. Therein she offered, in spite of the divorce, to join him in Elba, if her presence could afford him any consolation, and provided she was "the only one to fulfil her duty." This letter, like many others of hers since given to the public, has unfortunately been tampered with, and is therefore not inserted here verbatim; but however changed the phraseology, there is no doubt of Josephine's sentiments. She expressed them freely to all, even to the noble visitors who came frequently to Malmaison, including the Emperor Alexander, who at his first visit said: "Madame, I burned with a desire to behold you. Since I entered France I have never heard your name uttered except with blessings. In the cottage and in the palace I have collected accounts of your angelic goodness, and I do myself a pleasure in thus presenting to your Majesty the universal homage of which I am the bearer."

This pretty speech, delivered in a tone of intense



conviction, by the handsome and powerful ruler who had once been her husband's devoted friend, and who was even now his most generous foe, could not but please Josephine, who received him so charmingly that he called again and again, and used all his influence to assure her and her children a happy future. Josephine now reaped the reward for all her former kindness to the royalists. The returning Bourbons, unable to forget the benefits she had bestowed upon their party, tried to requite them by offering Eugene the post of Connétable, — which he refused, — by giving Hortense the title of Duchess of St. Leu, and by assuring to Josephine the possession of Malmaison with a suitable income.

Josephine, ever grateful, graciously expressed her thanks to the Czar, giving him the priceless cameo which she had received from the Pope at her coronation, and requested an audience of Louis XVIII. so that she might thank him also for his kindness to her and her children. We are told that when she appeared before this gouty monarch, her graceful carriage produced so favourable an impression upon him, that he actually rose to receive her, an act of homage he showed to few, owing to his age and infirmities.

The Czar, having begged permission to see St. Leu, Hortense went thither with her mother to receive him on the 15th of May. They two showed Alexander the grounds, and did the honours so acceptably that he spent a charming day. But while Josephine exerted herself to please this august guest, the sorrows of the past few months, and her continued anxiety for Napoleon, had so undermined her health that she once remarked: "I don't know what ails me, but I am sometimes overcome with such an accession of sadness that I feel I shall die."

The next day she was back at Malmaison, where, charmingly dressed as usual, she received her guests, and strove to smile upon them; but Madame d'Abrantès, touching her hand at leaving, exclaimed in dismay, for it was burning with fever. Josephine tried to reassure her by saying: "It is nothing, a little fatigue, my usual habits have been disturbed. When my own and my children's affairs are settled, I will rest."

On the 23rd of May she entertained the King of Prussia and his two sons at dinner, and on the morrow received the Russian Grand-Dukes, although she was suffering from a heavy cold and so exhausted that she had to withdraw several times to take a little rest. Besides, her illness and depression were increased by an article in the paper, stating that the remains of little Prince Napoleon Charles were to be removed from Notre Dame to an ordinary cemetery. In her anxiety to keep this piece of news from Hortense, who, as well as Eugene, was quite ill with a cold, she made such exertions, that her children failed to perceive her precarious condition until she had taken to her bed, and the physicians pointedly told them she had not long to live.

Josephine herself so little suspected her illness was fatal, that when she heard the Czar was coming to dinner, she insisted upon donning her prettiest pink wrapper so as to receive him suitably. A messenger having failed to meet and stop this august guest, Hortense and Eugene did the honours of their mother's house, while the Czar expressed deep sympathy, sharing their anxieties in the friendliest way, and promising to send frequently to inquire for the invalid.

Josephine, meantime, was already failing fast, talking to herself, when half asleep, about "Bonaparte," "Elba," and "Marie Louise," which plainly indicated that her

mind dwelt incessantly upon her main sources of grief. But when roused, she was as gentle and thoughtful as usual, and when told to prepare for death on Pentecost Sunday, she confessed, received the Sacrament, and after embracing and blessing her children, quietly said: "At least I shall die regretted. I have always desired the welfare of France, and I have done all that lay in my power to contribute to it. I can truthfully say to you who are present in this my dying hour, that Napoleon's first wife never caused a tear to flow."

Then, asking for Napoleon's picture, she kissed it, and, according to some authorities, held it to her breast while she prayed: "O God, watch over Napoleon while he remains in the desert of this world. Alas! though he has been guilty of great misdeeds, has he not expiated them by great suffering? Just God, Thou hast looked into his heart, and hast seen by how ardent a desire for useful and durable improvements he was animated. Deign to approve my last petition, and may this image of my husband bear witness that my latest wish and my latest prayer were for him and for my children." Hortense having fainted, Eugene supported his dying mother alone, until she passed away at noon on the 29th of May, 1814, at the age of fifty-one.

Her death, occurring just four weeks after Napoleon's arrival at Elba, created very little stir in France, the official newspaper merely announcing that: "The mother of Prince Eugene had died at noon in her castle at Malmaison, in consequence of an illness which first seemed a catarrhal fever, and which suddenly assumed such a malignant character that the patient succumbed at the end of three days. She received with as much piety as resignation all the consolations of religion. A few hours before her death she took pleasure in dwelling upon the



regrets of the numerous families she had been able to oblige, and it seems as if this hope softened her sorrows greatly."

The physicians who attended Josephine in her last illness declared, however, that she died of grief over Napoleon's sorrows, for her slight illness would never have proved fatal had she not been too broken-hearted to resist. But while many mourned, none regretted that she was taken, for she was thus spared the sorrows and agitations which would else have embittered her old age. Had she lived even one day longer, it would only have been to see France sign a humiliating treaty, whereby it renounced all the advantages won by Napoleon at the cost of so many precious lives.

Josephine's body was exposed from the day of her death to that of her interment on June 2nd, and visited by about twenty thousand persons. Her funeral was imposing, though simple, her grandchildren being chief mourners, because Eugene was too ill to attend. Many noted persons were present, however, besides the representatives of the Allies, and the procession closed with two thousand of the poor who had long lived upon her bounty. The church at Reuil whose bells could be heard so clearly at Malmaison, was chosen as Josephine's last resting-place, and her body still lies there, in the pedestal of Castellier's simple monument, which bears the brief inscription:

TO JOSEPHINE
EUGENE AND HORTENSE
1825

Many touching tributes were paid to the ex-Empress, the Czar saying: "She is no more; that woman whom France named the beneficent, that angel of goodness is no more. Those who have known Josephine can never



forget her. She dies regretted by her offspring, her friends, her contemporaries."

Her death, however, was also felt to be very opportune, not only because it saved her from further disappointments, but because it relieved the Bourbons, whose sentiments were best expressed by the Countess du Cayla, Louis XVIII.'s favourite: "Alas! how interesting a lady was this Josephine! What tact, what goodness! How well she knew how to do everything! And she shows her tact and good taste to the last, in dying just at this time."

The Bourbons were, indeed, spared great embarrassment and considerable expense by not having to provide for the woman who had supported so many royalists, and who, in spite of her huge income, died, as she had lived, deeply in debt. But her children loyally assumed all her liabilities, and paid them punctually, so that no stigma should rest upon the name of their beloved mother.

Although I can find no record of the way in which Napoleon received the tidings of Josephine's demise, he once stated that the sudden news of her death was "one of the keenest griefs of that fatal year of 1814." When he returned to France in 1815, and met Hortense in the Salon of the Tuileries, he bitterly reproached her for having remained in France and accepted favours from his foes. He then blamed Josephine, too, saying, "he could find no excuse for her," and that "her conduct had cut him to the heart!" When Hortense exclaimed, sobbing: "Your name was the last word on her dying lips!" he coldly retorted: "She should have respected it," and declared she should never have asked the king's permission to retain her title, for "it was an ineffaceable title, beyond the power of any sovereign to annul or con-



fer, having been confirmed by the Pope himself." But his temporary irritation soon subsided, and when he had forgiven and embraced Hortense, he begged for details of Josephine's last hours, adding: "You saw my poor Josephine die. In the midst of my disasters her death rends my heart."

Later, upon meeting his favourite physician, Corvisard, who was ill at the time of Josephine's death, Napoleon reproachfully exclaimed: "You let my poor Josephine die without your services." Then sending for the physicians who had attended her, he questioned them closely, and was evidently touched and pleased to see how constantly he had been in her thoughts, how faithfully she had loved him, and to learn the unanimous verdict that she had died of grief over his sorrows.

Although very busy re-organising his government, and preparing to fight a new coalition, Napoleon went out to Malmaison before the famous "Champ de Mai." Hortense, who had not entered the house since her mother's death, received him in the vestibule. After they had visited Josephine's tomb, and all the familiar nooks and corners of house and garden, and eaten a cheerless meal opposite her empty chair, Napoleon suddenly asked to see the room in which she had died. Forbidding Hortense to accompany him, lest it should move her too painfully, he entered it alone, spent some time there, and came out with tears in his eyes.

A few weeks later, after the crushing defeat at Waterloo, and his second abdication, Napoleon returned to Malmaison, where he remained from the 25th to the 29th of June, 1815. Hortense was there to receive and comfort him, and when he finally departed, she gave him a portrait of Josephine, and her own diamond necklace, fearing lest he might fall short of funds. It was at



Josephine

Malmaison that Napoleon bade his family a final farewell, and, entering his carriage, began the journey which was to end on the barren rock of St. Helena. The spot where his foot last rested at Malmaison was marked until 1870 by an eagle and brief inscription, although the estate often changed hands during that time. But in 1861, it was purchased by Josephine's grandson, the Emperor Napoleon III., who, remembering perfectly how the rooms looked when he was a child, had them carefully restored, and turned the whole place into a Napoleonic Museum, for the benefit of the state.

But during the Franco-Prussian war, Malmaison was entirely dismantled, and since then most of the grounds have been divided up into building lots and sold. For years Josephine's old home bore few signs of her sojourn in it; but it is now again being restored as a museum, and the mere name of Malmaison always calls up a graceful créole figure, strolling under the trees, and taking a tender interest in all the flowers which met her eye.

At St. Helena, Napoleon often mentioned Josephine, but whereas in the beginning he said: "She was right, my separation from her has brought misfortune upon my head;" he subsequently persuaded himself that the divorce was none of his doing, and said: "I ought not to have allowed myself to be separated from Josephine. No, I ought not to have been divorced from her; that was my misfortune."

In 1820 he proudly declared: "My divorce has no parallel in history, for it made no change in the ties which united us as a family, and our mutual tenderness remained the same. Our separation was a sacrifice which reason imposed in the interest of my crown. Josephine was devoted to me. She loved me dearly; and nobody ever had my place in her heart; I was first,



her children came afterward. She was right, for she was the one being I loved most, and her remembrance is yet all powerful in my heart!"

A year later, when very ill and about to die, Napoleon saw Josephine in a dream, and upon awakening said to an attendant: "I have just seen my darling Josephine, but she would not embrace me. She rose just as I tried to take her in my arms. She was seated there. It seemed to me that I had seen her the day before. She has not changed; always the same, just as devoted to me as ever. She told me we should soon meet, never to part again. She promised it to me."

This vision seemed so real to the dying captive, that he inquired of the attendant whether he had not seen the Empress too, and the last words his watchers could distinguish were faint murmurs of "France," "army," and "Josephine," his three great passions being still "strong in death."



MARIE LOUISE

MARIE LOUISE of Austria, second wife of Napoleon I., and great-granddaughter of the Empress Marie Thérèse, was born at Vienna, December 12, 1791. Like all Austrian archduchesses, she was brought up in strict seclusion, and in the utmost subjection to parental rule. Although her education included fluency in the principal European languages, drawing, and music, it excluded all individual thought, and kept her in utter ignorance of many practical things, under the pretext of preserving her innocence. Not only were school books mutilated, all mention of love, marriage, and children, for instance, being suppressed, but none but female pets were allowed in her neighbourhood.

Even in the nursery, however, the name of Napoleon was abhorred; the imperial children invariably selecting their ugliest toys to represent this bugaboo, whom they subjected in effigy to every torture and indignity infantile ingenuity could devise. The court having been obliged to flee into Hungary when Marie Louise was about fourteen, she naturally hoped her father might triumph, and vindictively remarked, concerning Napoleon: "Perhaps God has allowed him to advance so far, so that when He will have forsaken him, no hope will remain to him."

The motherless Marie Louise found herself at fifteen under the iron rule of a step-mother, only four years her senior, who also hated Napoleon with all her heart; and, believing like Marie Louise, that Eckmühl was an



Austrian victory, the Empress warmly echoed her wish: "May he also lose his head!"

Instead of perishing, Napoleon continued his victories, which culminated with Wagram, in spite of all the Austrian courage. An Austrian fanatic's attempt to murder him at Schönbrunn, only served to convince him more forcibly than ever of the need of an heir, and thus actually hastened his preparations for divorce and the negotiations for a royal bride. Already, some time before, a list had been drawn up of the eighteen marriageable European princesses, first among whom ranked a sister of the Czar. Her extreme youth, her mother's objections to an alliance with Napoleon, and a difference in religious belief, might all have been surmounted, however, had not Napoleon chafed at delay, and Metternich dreaded an alliance which would result in Austria's subjection. This minister, therefore, resolved to benefit his country by urging, instead, a marriage with Marie Louise, and he was overjoyed when his wife wrote that Josephine, Hortense, and Eugene openly advocated the plan. Indeed, Josephine wrote to Madame Metternich that she felt sure the Emperor would choose the archduchess in preference to any other bride, were he sure his suit would be accepted at Vienna, and added that she fancied acceptance could hardly be doubtful were the Austrian Emperor only made to see that "his ruin and that of his country would be certain if he did not consent."

Josephine's reason for preferring this alliance was a superstitious dread of seeing any but a Roman Catholic on the throne, and an ardent desire to prevent a more serious breach between Napoleon and the Pope. Napoleon, whose vanity was tickled at the prospect of a marriage with one of the oldest and proudest families in



MARIE LOUISE.

Europe, the same which had given the last queen to France, nevertheless affected some hesitation, and alluding to his descent from a race of Italian noblemen, he haughtily declared: "I certainly should not contemplate this marriage were I not aware that Marie Louise's origin is as noble as my own."

For a time, Josephine's successor was the theme of every conversation; but although some of the courtiers openly advocated a French bride, it was soon apparent that nothing short of a princess would satisfy Napoleon's vanity. At a council in the Tuileries, — seventeen years to a day after Louis XVI.'s death, — the Emperor made believe discuss the merits of the different alliances, showing his own preference so plainly, however, that his supposed advisers could only coincide with his opinion that an Austrian alliance was preferable to a Russian. But Cambacérès objected to this decision, predicted war with the rejected party within two years, and privately remarked to a friend: "I know that the Emperor is familiar with the road to Vienna, but I am not so sure he can find his way to St. Petersburg!"

The Czar's delay in accepting the Emperor's veiled proposals were now seized upon as a pretext to break off all negotiations with Russia, and Napoleon abruptly asked the Austrian ambassador whether a marriage contract with Marie Louise could be signed immediately. This official, perceiving that any hesitation would be construed as an insult by the impatient suitor, signed the contract on February 7, 1810, although he really had no power to do so without consulting the Austrian court, and although the future bride's consent had, as yet, not even been asked.

In fear and trembling, he despatched a special courier to Vienna with a copy of this contract, and an auto-



graph letter from Napoleon, who, it seems, took special pains to write as legibly as possible on this occasion. But his caligraphy was so poor that the letters had to be skilfully touched up by his secretary before they could be read by any but the initiated. Francis II., upon receiving this communication, declared that, in such a matter as this, his duty as a father came before his obligations as a sovereign, and he bade Metternich impart the proposal to the archduchess Marie Louise, and let her decide without any reference to him. The clever diplomat therefore hastened off to the blue-eyed, flaxen-haired, rosy-cheeked archduchess, whose schooling was so perfect, that after listening to all he said, she dutifully inquired her father's wishes.

When informed that Francis left the decision entirely to her, Marie Louise gently refused to assume such a responsibility, and declared her entire readiness to subordinate all personal wishes to the welfare of her father's kingdom. Francis II., perceiving that such an alliance would assure at least a few years of peace to Austria, dared not refuse, and after reluctantly consenting to sacrifice his daughter to his politics, he publicly announced the coming marriage. The news created a great sensation in Vienna, where, as it guaranteed peace, it was hailed with such satisfaction that Metternich was greatly elated, and said: "I pity the princess, but let her not forget that it is a fine thing to restore peace to such a good people."

He also wrote to the French capital: "The new Empress will please in Paris, and cannot but please there on account of her kindness, her great sweetness and simplicity. Rather homely than pretty of face, she has a fine figure, and when fixed up and properly dressed will look quite handsome. I have begged her to engage a dancing master as soon as she gets there, and not to

dance until she can do it well. She is most anxious to please, and one can always do so when actuated by such a desire."

The marriage was no sooner decided than great preparations were begun, and, to insure its lacking naught in pomp and solemnity, the same etiquette was observed as for the nuptials of the unhappy Marie Antoinette. The stir of all these preparations so delighted the pleasure-loving Viennese, that the French ambassador wrote home : " All glances are fixed almost exclusively upon Madame the archduchess. All those who have the honour of approaching her are eagerly interviewed, and every one is delighted to hear that she is in the happiest frame of mind, and makes no attempts to conceal her satisfaction at this marriage." The ambassador, knowing also how eagerly all details would be read, then went on to describe the princess as a model of gentleness, kindness, and modesty, mentioned her tall stature, good figure, and robust health, and pronounced her features " regular and very sweet."

One of Marie Louise's first gifts from her imperial fiancé was a miniature portrait, set in sixteen diamonds, valued at five hundred thousand francs, and which, according to Austrian custom, she immediately hung around her neck, her only comment in reference to her future bridegroom being however an indifferent: " He is not ill-looking." Meantime her own portrait was being made by two painters at once, so that the most favourable likeness could be forwarded straight to Paris. There it is said the Emperor studied it closely, and was greatly pleased to recognise the " Hapsburg lip," for he had fully determined to marry none but an unmistakable descendant of that famous race.

Although the French ambassador reported Marie



Louise pleased with the match, it is probable that an unsophisticated girl of eighteen, who had hitherto been kept in nun-like seclusion, gave the marriage itself little thought. Still she was quite dazed by the adulation she now received for the first time, and dazzled by the brilliant preparations, which progressed rapidly as soon as the Viennese court had been duly satisfied of the legality of Josephine's divorce. As it was Lent, a special dispensation was procured, and the wedding fixed for Sunday, March 11, 1810. On the eve of this day, Marie Louise, according to custom, solemnly renounced all claim to the Austrian crown for herself and her children, and two days after the sixteenth anniversary of Josephine's marriage, she went in state to the Augustine Church, where she was married by proxy, in the presence of the whole court, and of a special French envoy, the Prince of Neufchâtel. On this solemn occasion, Marie Louise's uncle personated the absent Emperor, to whom he immediately wrote a courteous letter, expressing his pleasure at having been selected, even temporarily, to fill the place of so great a monarch. After the marriage, at the official reception, the French ambassador first congratulated his new mistress, who perfunctorily remarked that she would "strive to please the Emperor and to contribute to the happiness of the French people, which had become her own."

Glowing descriptions of wedding, reception, and gala dinner were immediately forwarded to Paris, to the impatient bridegroom, who read with delight that, "All glances were fixed upon the principal actor, the adored princess who will soon make our sovereign happy," and his love of display was fully gratified by the assurance that "the ladies were wearied by the weight of the diamonds and pearls which covered their garments."



Marie Louise

On the 13th of March, after a whole day of rest, the Empress of the French took tender leave of her family, was escorted to the door by her step-mother, and, weeping unrestrainedly, stepped into the travelling carriage which was to bear her away from home. Escorted by a body of cuirassiers, and dignitaries in carriages drawn by six horses, the new Empress (in her coach drawn by eight steeds) passed through long lines of troops, and crossed the bridge, while bands played and cannons boomed. But the cortege of eighty-three carriages could proceed but slowly, owing to muddy roads, so it took some time to reach Linz, where Marie Louise met her father, who had come thither to bid farewell to the gentle daughter whom the people called: "Louise the Pious." This public parting, however, did not satisfy a father's heart, and when Marie Louise arrived at St. Poltern in Bavaria, she found that Francis II. had journeyed thither incognito, merely to enjoy the sad pleasure of embracing her once more. The journey was now resumed, every city or hamlet doing its utmost to honour the new Empress, who was to be delivered into the hands of French representatives at Braunau, where a group of three adjoining pavilions was erected for that express purpose. One of these was considered the Austrian Pavilion, and another, by courtesy, the French; the connecting space being recognised by both nations as neutral ground.

According to custom, Marie Louise entered the first with her Austrian escort, was delivered into the hands of the French authorities in the second, and when all the formalities had been fulfilled, and her dowry of five hundred thousand francs, duly paid in new coin, she passed over to French soil. The imperial household, waiting in the third pavilion, were so eager to behold their new mistress, that one of them had actually brought



a gimlet, with which he bored a hole through the wooden partition to which ladies and gentlemen alike applied curious eyes in turn. Still, all were delighted with the appearance of Marie Louise, who wore a heavy robe of gold brocade, and professed themselves overjoyed to see Napoleon's miniature hanging from her neck.

Business concluded, the Empress, with tears in her eyes, watched her Austrian attendants file past her throne, ere she was conducted by the Prince of Neufchâtel into the French pavilion. There she was first introduced to the Queen of Naples, — Napoleon's sister, — who had come thither to bid her welcome to France. Entering the same carriage, the sisters-in-law next drove slowly into the city of Braunau, where great preparations had been made to receive the Empress, and whither both French and Austrian escorts accompanied them.

In her lodgings here, opposite the City Hall, Marie Louise found an elaborate French toilet-table and the trousseau prepared by Napoleon's order, and, according to time-honoured custom, proceeded to divest herself of every stitch of Austrian raiment so as to assume a purely French garb. But, unlike Marie Antoinette, she was spared the embarrassment of a public toilet, customs having so changed during the past twenty-five years that even Levers and Couchers were now only the more or less formal receptions of fully dressed sovereigns.

It is stated that Marie Louise's trousseau consisted of sixty-four dresses, valued at 126,976 francs, seventeen shawls at 39,860 francs, sixty pairs of shoes, etc., etc.; in short, more than four hundred thousand francs worth of wearing apparel, and a sum of 360,000 francs was promised her for the yearly replenishing of this sumptuous wardrobe. Napoleon, who had taken the liveliest interest in the preparation of this trousseau, examined and criticised



every article before it was sent to her. It is also said that he playfully slapped his servant's cheeks with one of the pretty new shoes, — which seemed remarkably small for so tall a bride, — and remarked gleefully: "Constant, that's a promising shoe. Have you seen many feet that could wear that?"

After receiving the homage of the town authorities at Braunau, Marie Louise wrote to her father, mentioning the ordeal she had just passed through, stating ruefully: "I had to endure a two hours' toilet. I assure you that I am already as strongly perfumed as the other French women," and she concluded her missive with renewed expressions of regret at leaving her beloved home. It was in this town that Marie Louise took leave of all her Austrian attendants save one, and, stepping into her carriage drove away, after receiving a touching fatherly blessing from the Prince of Trautmannsdorff, the Austrian nobleman who had been charged to deliver her into the hands of the French envoys.

The Empress now journeyed on to Münich, where a sorrowful experience awaited her, for the Queen of Naples, wishing to get her new sister-in-law entirely under her own control, suddenly dismissed the Austrian lady who was to escort her to Paris and remain with her there one year. Too timid to resist, after being drilled for years to implicit obedience, Marie Louise wept and yielded, but she wrote to her father: "How painful this separation is to me! I could not make a greater sacrifice to my husband, and still I do not believe that he wished it."

The Queen of Naples, having met with no active resistance in her first attempt at tyranny, next declared that Marie Louise must also send back her little lap-dog, for Napoleon could not endure pets, and



tore it open, and just as one of the attendants exclaimed: "The Emperor!" he sprang into the coach to embrace his bride. All ceremony and preconceived arrangements were thus upset, and Napoleon, seated opposite his wife and sister, eagerly examined this "fine girl, radiant with youth, freshness, health, and strength, with her beautiful golden hair, blue eyes, and general appearance of innocence and candour." Such was her surprise, that she, too, stared at the man to whom she had been married two weeks before, forgetting all else. But, however eloquent the glances this couple exchanged, their first remarks were as commonplace as those of ordinary mortals, for Napoleon briefly exclaimed: "You 're surely not afraid of mud," on sitting down, and the new Empress naïvely remarked: "Why, you 're much better looking than your picture!" This exclamation nevertheless delighted the Emperor, who then and there decided that they would journey on together, and despatched a courier ahead of him to announce their arrival at Compiègne that evening.

All the elaborate program for the morrow's reception was thus upset, but to the untold satisfaction of Marie Louise, who had greatly dreaded the formal meeting and longed to have it safely over. At nine o'clock the cortege arrived at Compiègne, where, despite short notice and pouring rain, arches had been hastily erected and the castle brilliantly illumined to welcome the bridal party. Napoleon led the new Empress straight to her apartments, where one authority declares she was overjoyed to find a piece of unfinished fancy-work which she had left behind her at Braunau, as well as her birds and little lap-dog, which the Emperor had sent for as soon as he learned that she seemed to miss them. Napoleon and Marie Louise supped in these rooms alone with the



Queen of Naples, and then paid a brief visit to Pauline Borghese, whom illness confined to her chamber.

On returning with the Empress to her private rooms, Napoleon inquired what parting instructions her father had given her, and when Marie Louise innocently answered that he had bidden her "Belong to her husband wholly, and obey him in all things," he suddenly determined to make another change in the official program, and claim his marital rights immediately, instead of waiting until another marriage ceremony had taken place. Instead, therefore, of spending the night elsewhere — as etiquette prescribed — he remained in the castle, slily asking his servant the next morning whether any one had noticed the violation of proprieties, which, after all, was only a repetition of Henry IV.'s behaviour with Marie de Médicis. It was quite evident to all, however, that the Emperor was not only rather proud of himself, but charmed with his bride, for he gaily tweaked one of his unmarried officers' ears and said to him confidentially: "My dear fellow, marry a German. They are the nicest wives in the world, good, innocent, and as sweet and fresh as roses."

His toilet ended, the Emperor hastened back to Marie Louise, who remained in bed until noon to recover from the fatigues of her journey, her husband having breakfast served by her women on a small table by her bedside, so that he could share this meal with her.

While the Empress was preparing for some presentations which were to take place at one o'clock, the Emperor wrote to his father-in-law: "Allow me to thank you for the fine present you have sent me. May your fatherly heart rejoice in the happiness of your daughter." This missive was despatched by a special courier, with one from Marie Louise, in which, after expressing her



relief at being spared the ceremonious meeting at Compiègne, she frankly added: "Since that moment I have been almost intimate with him; he loves me deeply, and I return his affection. I am convinced that I shall be happy with him. My health continues good. I am quite rested from my journey." Certainly, this letter did not sound as if she were a great martyr to duty, nor did her subsequent missives, for five days later she wrote: "I am as happy as it is possible to be."

At one o'clock on the 28th of March, all the ladies and officers of the Empress' household — whom she had not yet seen — were presented and took their oath of fidelity. Next came the introductions of all the dignitaries, and a joyful recognition of Count Metternich and Prince Schwarzenberg, who both rejoiced in their share in effecting so satisfactory a marriage. Napoleon, too, was in a genial mood that day, and when he and Marie Louise dined in state together, he donned a fantastic costume designed by his sister Pauline, but which he judged so unbecoming that he never wore it again, preferring the uniform in which he always appeared to his best advantage.

On the 31st of March the Imperial party left Compiègne for St. Cloud, Napoleon and Marie Louise riding in state in the same carriage, and pausing at the entrance of the Bois de Boulogne, where the Empress was welcomed by the Prefect of the Seine with the pompous speech: "Escorted thither from Vienna by the love of the nations, your Majesty now knows that it is your destiny to reign over all hearts by the ascendency of your virtues, as well as by the charms of your person. It will be our duty and privilege, Madame, to enable you to find again in your present abode, the countries you love best, those where you were most beloved, and to strive to



render the testimony of our respect and of our love, worthy of your Majesties." Crowds had collected all along the road to give the Imperial party a continuous ovation until they reached St. Cloud, where a state dinner and new presentations closed the day.

On the 1st of April, 1810, at 2 P.M. at St. Cloud, in the Gallery of Apollo, Napoleon and Marie Louise were married by civil rite, the Arch-Chancellor concluding the brief ceremony in this curious way: "In the name of the Emperor and of the law, I declare that His Imperial and Royal Majesty, Napoleon, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and her Imperial and Royal Highness, the Archduchess Marie Louise are united in marriage." Salvos of artillery published the news of Napoleon's civil marriage abroad, — salvos which were repeated from point to point, until they even reached the ears of the unhappy Josephine at Navarre. This was, however, a proud day for Napoleon, who stood beside the young Empress in the same hall where he had faced the Assembly in Brumaire in 1799, where he had been proclaimed Emperor in 1804, and whence he was to set out for the fatal campaign in Russia in 1812.

The official signing of the wedding contract followed the civil marriage, the Emperor's family crowding eagerly forward to inscribe their names on the sheet beneath those of Napoleon and Marie Louise. Not only were Madame Mère and Napoleon's brothers and sisters present on this occasion; but Eugene and Hortense also had prominent places in the cortege at the Emperor's special request. In fact, the only guests who failed to appear were fourteen Italian cardinals, who refused to accept as binding a divorce not pronounced by the Pope, and whose absence roused a storm of imperial wrath.

After a family dinner, a play was given in the

Orangerie, which was followed by a grand illumination of the Park with all its spouting fountains; for, although it was raining in Paris on that day, the weather was fine at St. Cloud. This fortunate state of affairs was to favour their Majesties also on the morrow, the sunshine following them as they drove in state to the capital for their religious marriage at the Tuileries. Magnificent preparations had been made there for their reception, a sham Arc de Triomphe being erected on the spot where the foundations for the real one had already been laid, and which bore the inscription:

TO NAPOLEON AND MARIE LOUISE
THE CITY OF PARIS

The state carriage halted directly under the broad arch, while the Governor of Paris delivered his welcoming address, and then proceeded down the Champs Elysées. Dense crowds of spectators lined both sides of the way, all gazing in open-mouthed admiration at the pageant, and especially at the Empress, who wore all the glittering crown jewels so lately seen on Josephine. Moving slowly, the procession came at last to the Place de la Concorde, where Marie Louise's great-aunt, Marie Antoinette, was beheaded sixteen years before, and finally drew up before the great entrance of the Tuileries, barely in time for the wedding in the Salon Carré of the Louvre.

There, all had been ready for hours, and the spectators were already in their places, save the still delinquent cardinals. The Imperial cortege entered the Salon Carré at the stroke of three, Napoleon duly attended by his brothers and dignitaries, while Marie Louise's mantle was supported by her five sisters-in-law, one of whom, — the unhappy Hortense, — could not restrain the heavy



THE MARRIAGE OF MARIE LOUISE, 1810.

Rouget.





tears which dropped on the new Empress' embroidered robes. But whereas Hortense was sad, and could not forget Josephine, Napoleon was simply radiant, until he perceived the absence of the cardinals, when his brow lowered and remained overcast throughout the remainder of the ceremony.

The marriage over, the Imperial party returned to their apartments, where Marie Louise removed her crown and mantle, which were carried in state to Notre Dame. But after she had rested for a few minutes she appeared with her husband on the balcony of the Tuileries, to receive the enthusiastic homage of the Parisian crowd. Next came a state banquet, followed by a grand illumination, the Emperor and Empress viewing the fireworks from the balcony, before listening to a brilliant cantata which had been composed for this occasion, which was further honoured by one hundred and fifty epithalamiums.

The next day, their Majesties held an official reception in the Tuileries, and heard many addresses, to one of which Napoleon made the following characteristic response, — naming himself before his bride in truly imperial, but not very gallant style: "I and the Empress feel that we deserve the feelings you express by the love we bear to our people."

The fourteen Italian cardinals who had roused the Emperor's wrath were not only refused admittance on this occasion, but Napoleon banished them from court, besides depriving them of the privilege of wearing their red gowns, thereby making them famous in history as the Black Cardinals.

Although over forty, Napoleon was very anxious to please his eighteen-year-old wife and win her heart. He found her gentle and modest, and as she had emerged from the schoolroom only to marry, court restrictions



did not seem so irksome to her. Her private life was just as simple, quiet, and uneventful as before, her time being still devoted to music, painting, embroidery, and reading. But, although quiet, she was never alone, for etiquette required the constant presence of one of her ladies. Indeed, the Empress was guarded as closely as the Archduchess had been; but as she was of a very tractable disposition, she allowed her husband or Madame de Montebello — who was eighteen years her senior and "a lady of honour who was an honourable lady indeed" — to regulate her every movement. She had been so little accustomed to freedom or amusement, that the monotony of this seclusion was not burdensome to her; and after the first novelty wore off, she greatly preferred it to state receptions, banquets, reviews, or other ceremonies, or even to the long drives through the capital, when she was always accompanied by a part of her household. In fact, Marie Louise was so contented with her lot, that she then wrote: "What my father often told me has come true, I find the Emperor extremely amiable," and on another occasion, still speaking of Napoleon, she declared: "We suit each other perfectly."

Metternich, having known Marie Louise from infancy and negotiated this marriage, the Emperor was particularly anxious to have him see how happy his wife really was, so he ushered him into the Empress' presence one day, and, contrary to all precedent left him alone with her, locking the door upon them both. An hour later, he returned to release his prisoners and laughingly inquired: "Well, have you had a good talk? Did the Empress say much harm of me? Did she laugh or did she cry?" But then, catching himself up, he seriously declared that he did not care to know their



secrets, a statement which Metternich slily repeated to him the next day, when curiosity suddenly became rampant, and he tried to discover what his young wife had said about him to her old friend. Still, any doubts on this question were futile at that time, for Marie Louise was well pleased with her fate, and greatly flattered by the fact that the Emperor changed some of his habits merely to please her. He took all his meals with her, catered to her individual tastes by ordering plenty of sweets, gratified her every wish, and made her frequent brief visits in the course of the day, to make sure she was neither sad nor homesick.

It is also said that one of the rooms of the Tuileries was furnished by his order exactly like her pet nook at home, all her girlish possessions having been secretly conveyed thither from Vienna for this express purpose. Shortly after the wedding, Napoleon led her along the dark and narrow corridors of the palace to this room, laughing gleefully when she clung to him in her terror of spooky corners, and saying: "Don't be afraid, my little Marie Louise, you are with me, no harm can happen to you." But when they reached the mysterious apartment, and the door was flung open, Marie Louise fairly gasped with pleasure and surprise, and began to run around the room, touching the familiar objects and loudly expressing her delight. Then, remembering the pains her husband had taken to procure her this pleasure, she impetuously ran to the window where he stood watching her rapture, and clasped her arms around his neck. This demonstrative embrace, seen by the crowd gazing up at the palace windows, caused a burst of lusty cheers, which drove the shame-faced young Empress back to the very depths of her new apartment, where the Emperor followed her, highly pleased.



The wedding ceremonies being all over, Napoleon and Marie Louise withdrew to Compiègne for a brief honeymoon, during which the young bride took her first dancing lessons, and Napoleon, who had only recently mastered the art, often took a turn with her in spite of his forty years. He also volunteered to teach her to ride, a proposal which charmed Marie Louise, who had hitherto been deprived of that pleasure for fear of an accident. Early every morning, therefore, horses were brought to the door, and the Emperor not only mounted the Empress himself, but at first walked by her side, holding her fast until she grew accustomed to the motion, and gained sufficient courage to sit upright in her saddle. When she had progressed far enough to ride without support, Napoleon mounted his own steed to ride around the park or garden with her, laughing merrily at her terrors, urging her steed by sly touches of his whip, and directing her how to sit or hold her reins. But, boisterous as he was, he was also careful that no harm should befall her, and to guard against possible accident, he stationed watchful attendants every ten paces along their course, giving them orders to check the Empress' horse when necessary, to save her from any fall. These riding lessons were carried on until Marie Louise became sufficiently expert to enjoy the hunting parties at Compiègne and Fontainebleau, where, she was often seen with her ladies during her brief reign.

One day, Marie Louise expressed a casual regret that there was no stately grape arbour at Compiègne, under which they two could stroll, in shade and seclusion, and reminded Napoleon of the one at Schönbrunn. The indulgent husband immediately sent for a skilled landscape gardener, who planned an arbour eighteen hundred



THE TRIUMPH OF MARIE LOUISE, 1810.

Gros.

meters long, and so lofty that one could even drive under it in a coach and four.

On the 27th of April, the Imperial honeymoon ended, and Napoleon set out with his wife for a tour in Northern France, where they were received with music, flowers, and fulsome speeches galore. In fact, popular adulation reached such proportions that in one hamlet Napoleon was addressed as "Pater Noster," while Marie Louise was welcomed as "Ave Maria, gratia plena!" a performance which did not seem to shock any one at the time. Thus their Majesties journeyed on, midst plaudits and salvos; but although constant representation soon grew rather wearisome to Marie Louise, she would not consent to let the Emperor finish his tour alone, but gratified him hugely by begging permission to remain with him until they returned to St. Cloud, on the 1st of June.

Ten days later, they attended a grand festival given in their honour at the Hôtel de Ville, which consisted of a banquet followed by a ball, illuminations, and fireworks. Then came a series of private fêtes culminating in the ball of the Austrian ambassador, Prince Schwarzenberg. He had erected in his garden a huge but flimsily built ball-room, which was artistically draped, festooned with garlands, and brilliantly lighted with countless wax tapers. The ball was at its height; and the Emperor had just left Marie Louise upon the dais, to take a stroll among the dancers, when the light draperies from one of the windows suddenly blew against a lighted candle. Some gentlemen, standing near, tried to seize the flaming draperies and tear them down, but the fire had already reached the decorations, and three minutes later the whole room was ablaze. The panic which ensued is indescribable. Metternich took up his post by Marie Louise, where



Napoleon joined him as quickly as possible; while Prince Schwarzenberg and the principal officers, — who imagined the fire was intended to cover an attempt at assassination, — immediately surrounded them both, to convey them to a place of safety. In fact, it was only when the Empress was seated in her carriage, that the distracted ambassador rushed back into the hall, where his wife and daughters had been dancing, a moment before, with some of their distinguished guests.

Satisfied that the fire was purely accidental, Napoleon now bade Marie Louise drive to St. Cloud alone, and hastened back to the scene of the conflagration to direct the work of the rescuers. But, despite his inspiring presence, and the heroism of the Austrian ambassador and many of his guests, many precious lives were lost, and the corpses were recognised on the morrow only by the jewels, or orders, scattered near them or clinging to their charred bones. Among other distinguished victims of this horrible catastrophe, was the wife of the Austrian ambassador, who, having escaped once, rushed back into the flames in quest of one of her daughters.

Meantime, Marie Louise had driven home; but the utmost anxiety reigned in the palace until the Emperor returned there at four o'clock in the morning, grimy and weary, but quite safe. He hastened immediately to his wife's room to reassure her, and, sinking exhausted into a chair, allowed her attendants to remove his charred gloves, while he graphically described the heartrending scenes which he had just witnessed. This calamity cast a gloom over everything for a while, and although both Napoleon and Marie Louise escaped unharmed, superstitious people began to whisper that it was a presage of coming evil

The Emperor, who, according to most writers, was a

kind master and easy to live with when not crossed, continued kind and attentive to Marie Louise, and was, at first, so afraid of hurting her feelings and being considered stern or exacting, that he once begged Metternich to explain to her a necessary point of etiquette in his stead. He was so careful not to frighten her, that she considered him quite angelic, and soon wrote home: "I assure you, dear papa, that the Emperor has been greatly slandered. The more one learns to know him, the more one appreciates and loves him," and on another occasion: "The Emperor is the most amiable of men."

But, notwithstanding this indulgence for his wife, Napoleon was very strict with others, and woe betide the attendant who failed to observe the etiquette he prescribed! One of his principal tenets was that no man should ever be allowed within the sacred precincts of the Empress' private rooms, and especially that she should never remain even for a moment alone with any male visitor or attendant. A cabinet-maker having constructed a chest with secret drawers for Marie Louise's use, had to obtain the Emperor's special permission before he could explain to her its cunning mechanism. But, even then, a lady-in-waiting was present, although, on this one occasion only, she stood so far away that she could not hear what was said. The Emperor, having forgotten granting this permission, happened however to enter his wife's room just then, and seeing her apparently alone with a man, he was about to discharge all the vials of his wrath upon that unfortunate individual and the attendants, when his wife checked him by a hurried explanation.

On another occasion he roundly scolded a lady-in-waiting who ventured to go to the door to give an order while Marie Louise was taking a singing lesson.



When she tried to excuse herself, he sternly retorted: "Madame, I honour and respect the Empress, but the sovereign of a great Empire must be placed out of reach of all suspicion." These precautions, so customary at that time, were, however, in no wise derogatory to Marie Louise's fair fame, which Napoleon guarded so jealously. Not even he could reach her without passing through the room of the chief lady-in-waiting, who challenged him as well as any one else, and mounted guard over her charge night and day, like the veriest duenna.

Napoleon's divorce and second marriage having been effected solely for the sake of an heir, he was, of course, very anxious to see this wish fulfilled, and was therefore quite overjoyed about the middle of August, when the court physicians announced that the Empress was in a fair way to crown his hopes. Although this news was not officially proclaimed until late in November, it was too good a secret to keep, and gradually leaked out; but while no notice could be taken of it until formally confirmed, all were ready with congratulatory speeches on the anniversary of the Coronation and of Austerlitz, when a solemn Te Deum was sung.

Some writers aver that the first official intimation of the coming event was given by Napoleon, at Fontainebleau, immediately after the christening of Hortense's third son, who was to succeed him on the imperial throne. The Emperor then pointedly remarked to the assembled guests: "I trust, ere long, we shall have another baptism."

If Napoleon had been kind and indulgent to his young wife before she was with child, he was doubly attentive now, and, discovering by accident that she had refused to buy some rubies which she wanted, but deemed too costly, he surprised her by presenting her with others worth eight



REVIEW DAY UNDER THE FIRST EMPIRE, 1810.
Bellange.



times as much on New Year's Day. He also gave her valuable presents to bestow upon her family and friends, and as she always showed signs of unmistakable jealousy at any mention of Josephine, and wept when told that her husband called upon her, he now paid his visits secretly, excusing himself for making a mystery of such a matter by saying, that it would "hurt his wife's feelings," should she hear what he had done. Still Napoleon was very boyish in many ways, and not above teasing his wife, for one day he tantalisingly exclaimed: "There, you see your father is a thief, he takes what does not belong to him." Whereat she promptly retorted: "That 's true; but you are worse than he; you steal kingdoms, and he only seizes a little land!"

Only once Napoleon so far forgot himself as to exclaim in her presence that the Emperor of Austria, — whose notorious stupidity often exasperated him, — was a "chump" (*une ganache*). Marie Louise, unversed in French slang, innocently asked what that might mean, and being mendaciously informed that it signified "a fine fellow," electrified the court soon after by gravely applying that term to a diplomat whom she wished to address in a particularly gracious manner!

One day when Napoleon entered Marie Louise's apartment, he found her amusing herself by concocting an omelet. Although a hurried attempt was made to conceal this undertaking from him, he sniffed and poked around until he had discovered the secret, and then cried: "What, you are making an omelet? Bah! you don't know anything about it. I 'll show you how to do it!" Speaking thus, he immediately set to work; all went well until he undertook to toss the omelet, which fell on the floor, and the imperial cook fled, laughing uproariously.

But, gentle as the new wife was, she could be very



obstinate too, and Napoleon found her on the whole far less accommodating than Josephine. Not only did she keep him waiting, — a thing no one else ever dared do, — but she insisted upon having her rooms quite cold, although he shivered in them, and called for a fire. Very often, too, she sat down to table without him, instead of waiting his good pleasure for hours, as her predecessor had done. But Napoleon took all these innovations very philosophically, was extremely indulgent, and exacted very little entertainment from his placid young wife, whose sole "art of pleasing" is said to have consisted in moving her ears without stirring a single muscle of her face! This talent was often called into requisition by her ladies, as time went on, to vary the monotony of the long hours spent with her, for, feeling no lively interest in any one but herself or her absent family, Marie Louise was not by far as charming a companion as Josephine.

Fortunately, the coming of a tiny stranger furnished a new and absorbing topic of conversation for the court ladies, who, after all, took a far keener interest in the preparations than the apathetic young mother expectant. A baby outfit costing three hundred thousand francs was carefully planned, and, after due deliberation, Napoleon selected the Countess de Montesquiou — a most estimable lady of forty-six — to take entire charge of the imperial child from the moment of its birth, bestowing upon her the sonorous title of "Governess of the Children of France." As a lady of such high degree as the Empress never nursed her own offspring, a nurse was also carefully chosen, — the wife of a joiner of Fontainebleau, — and as the sex of the child could not of course be determined beforehand, two baskets were prepared — blue for a girl and pink for a boy. As the time drew near for

the advent of the ardently expected babe, all manner of gifts began to pour into the palace, and the Prefect of the Seine officially presenting the Empress with an exquisite silver-gilt cradle, in the name of the City of Paris. This article of furniture, designed by Prud'hon, an artist of note, was a masterpiece, crowned by a dainty figure of Glory upholding a glittering star. Below this exquisite statuette, silken curtains fell on either side of the downy, lace-covered nest, at the foot of which crouched a young eagle apparently about to soar up to the star, upon which its ardent gaze was fixed.

Although the Empress seldom appeared in public after the end of January, she exercised daily in the Tuileries garden, where the people watched her move slowly up and down the walks, and often blessed her audibly, and wished her good luck. The birth of the Emperor's child being a matter of national interest, the public was informed that the first symptoms of parturition would be announced by the ringing of the church bells, while the conclusion would be proclaimed by the cannon of the Invalides, twenty-one salvos being fired for a girl, and one hundred and one for a boy.

On the 19th of March the church bells suddenly began pealing, so all night long the churches were full of devout people, eagerly praying for the safe arrival of the longed-for heir. As custom requires the presence of a certain number of witnesses to testify to the legitimacy of royal offspring, the physician, nurse, four court ladies, and two chambermaids remained in the Empress' apartment all night, while Napoleon, his family, and officials waited in adjoining rooms. From time to time, the Emperor stole softly to his wife's bedside to hold her hand, and encourage her gently; but when she fell asleep in the early morning, the attendant physicians declared



his presence would not be required for some time. Napoleon, therefore, withdrew to his dressing-room, where he proceeded to take a bath to refresh himself after his long vigil. But, while he was thus engaged, the door suddenly burst open, and the distracted physician rushed in, declaring that the Empress was again in pain, for unexpected complications had arisen. Napoleon, seeing the physician had lost the presence of mind so indispensable at that moment, immediately exclaimed, in the most reassuring way: "Come, come, Mr. Dubois, don't lose your head. Save the mother, think of her only. Just imagine you are attending the wife of some shopkeeper on the rue St. Denis. You cannot do any more for her than for anybody else; but, whatever happens, consider the mother first. I will follow you immediately!"

Somewhat braced by these instructions, the physician now hastened back to his patient, closely followed by the Emperor, who had not even taken time to dry himself, and was only half-clothed. At sight of his wife's suffering, the man who had never quailed on the field of battle in the midst of dead and dying, suddenly turned fearfully pale. But even then his presence of mind did not entirely desert him, for while kissing and comforting Marie Louise, he encouraged her attendants to do all they could for her speedy relief. But when all were at work, and his presence superfluous, once more he did — what many another brave man has done — turned and fled.

The use of instruments becoming necessary toward the end, Marie Louise lost her self-control and bitterly cried: "Must I be sacrificed merely because I am an Empress?" but Madame de Montesquiou, who was helping hold her, gently reassured her, saying: "Cour-



age, Madame, I have gone through the same operation. I assure you your precious life is not in danger."

The latter statement, however, proved not quite true, for after the birth of the babe at 8.40 that morning, Marie Louise lay in such a critical condition that the child was hastily put down on the floor, where it remained, blue, lifeless, and unheeded. Without a look at, or a question concerning his eagerly expected heir, Napoleon kissed his wife, speaking affectionately to her. But Madame de Montesquiou and the others, finally released from other duties, began to rub the inanimate child, forced a few drops of brandy down his throat, and worked to such good purpose that at the end of seven minutes a lusty cry proclaimed him very much alive. At the first sound, Napoleon pounced like an eagle upon his son and heir, took him in his arms, kissed him rapturously, and, rushing to the door, exultantly exhibited him to the expectant throng in the neighbouring room. A second later, the child was again in the hands of his startled attendants, and Napoleon, finding his presence in the sick room unwelcome, now passed on to his own apartment, where he gave the signal for general congratulations by exclaiming: "Well, sirs, we have a fine strong boy! He had to be coaxed a bit before he would put in an appearance, but he has come at last!" Then, a wave of recollection coming even in the midst of his exultation, he added, in moved tones: "Dear wife, how brave she has been and how she has suffered! I had rather never have another child than see her suffer like this again." This impression, so natural under the circumstances, was, however, never to pass away, and as the physicians later told him that another birth would probably cost his wife's life, we are informed that Napoleon never even wished for other children, but was satisfied



with the sole heir upon whose precarious life he built all his hopes for the future.

The church bells had proclaimed that the expected infant would soon appear, so a dense but noiseless crowd collected in the Tuileries garden at early dawn, and gazed eagerly up at the Empress' window, waiting with bated breath for some sign of the expected news. Napoleon, standing behind the curtain of Marie Louise's room, looked down upon a sea of upturned faces, and saw the start which welcomed the first boom of the Invalides' cannon. No sound save the heavy reverberation of the mighty guns, and the breathless, unanimous counting of the multitude, could now be heard on the vast square. But when the twenty-one shots were followed by others, and no doubt remained that a son had been born in the Tuileries, the crowd simply went mad with joy, ceased counting, and cheered so lustily that tears coursed down the Emperor's cheeks. Napoleon's servant, speaking of this thrilling moment, declares: "Glory never made him shed a single tear, but the bliss of being a father touched the soul which the most brilliant victories and the most sincere testimonies of public admiration had left almost unmoved."

At 10.30, Madame Blanchard, the famous aeronaut, went up in a balloon, carrying huge supplies of papers, announcing the birth of Napoleon's heir, which she tossed out by the handful, thus scattering abroad the news which cannon and signal telegraph were doing their best to publish far and wide. Everywhere the joyful tidings were welcomed with the same extravagant demonstrations of joy, for no one suspected that the child who had been styled King of Rome, even before he came into the world, was to die, like his illustrious father, in exile!



Marie Louise

In his ecstasy, Napoleon could scarcely tear himself away from the cradle where his son slumbered; but he wrote in person to the Emperor of Austria and to Josephine, remarking, as he signed the missives: "Those are very good letters. I never signed better ones." Then he entrusted them to special couriers, who made the utmost despatch, proudly proclaiming the news as they dashed along on their joyful errand.

At nine o'clock of the evening of the 20th of March, 1811, on his birthday, the little King of Rome was privately baptised in the chapel of the Tuileries, Napoleon himself holding the child over the font, and all who were present at this ceremony bear witness to the pride with which his eyes rested upon the long-desired heir of all his glory. Two days later, at a state reception, the Emperor received the congratulations of Senate and diplomats, and was delighted when the former made a flattering allusion in their speech to "the new star which has arisen on the horizon of France, and whose first rays disperse the faintest shadows of the darkness in the future."

Meantime, the chamberlains — whose number had been doubled for this express purpose — were kept busy from morning until night answering inquiries, receiving congratulations, and acknowledging the two thousand poems written to celebrate the joyous advent of Napoleon's heir. But while no one was allowed to approach the young mother, sundry deputations and dignitaries were vouchsafed a glimpse of the child, whom the Legislative Assembly honoured with a special address, gravely read aloud in his sleeping presence. The Governess' acknowledgment of this speech was duly reported by the deputation to the Legislature as follows: "We conveyed to him, gentlemen, the expression of your most



tender sentiments, mingled with such wishes as the love of our own children inspires within us. Madame the Governess received them, and thanked us in the name of the young Prince, regretting, no doubt, that she was unable to add his personal sentiments to those which she expressed to the Legislative Assembly."

These addresses and demonstrations all pleased the Emperor greatly, and he ordered that all these tokens of congratulation, as well as the two thousand poems, should be printed as a souvenir of the birth of the King of Rome, in whose honour the whole city was brilliantly illuminated on the night of his birth. Balloons being all the rage, a huge one was launched from the Champ de Mars, and all openly wondered where it would fall. It was, therefore, considered a particularly happy omen when news came that it had landed in Rome; but the Emperor started when he heard that it was found resting upon Nero's tomb, and he made a violent effort to shake off a superstitious dread, by exclaiming carelessly: "Well, I would sooner see it there, than in the dust of the streets!"

Although the Empress had been so ill, she recovered with surprising rapidity, and while paler and less plump than before, she felt so well that she took her first airing on the terrace of the Tuileries on the 17th of April, the people showing their pleasure by cheering her enthusiastically. The next day she took a drive, and on Sunday was solemnly churched in the Chapel of the Tuileries. Even this ceremony wearied her so little that on the 21st of April, the imperial court could remove to St. Cloud, where the little Prince was to be brought up as much as possible in the open air. There his mother resumed her wonted occupations, writing in her first letter to her father: "You can't imagine my



MARIE LOUISE AND THE KING OF ROME, 1811.
Franque.





great happiness, I would never have believed that I could experience such rapture. My affection for my husband has increased, if such a thing were possible, since the birth of this son. I am still moved to tears when I think of the proofs of tenderness which he has given me. Those tokens would bind me to him were not my heart already won by all his good qualities. He bids me remember him to you. He often inquires about you and says: 'Your father must be very happy to have a grandson.' When I tell him that you already love this child he is delighted. I take the liberty of sending you my child's picture. You will doubtless see that he looks like the Emperor. He is very strong for five weeks old. When he came into the world he weighed nine pounds. He is very healthy and spends the whole day in the garden. The Emperor takes a great interest in his son, he dandles him, plays with him, and tries to feed him, but cannot manage that."

Marie Louise talked thus of her child at first, but her maternal instincts were never strongly developed, and her babe always seemed more of a curiosity and a plaything to her than "flesh of her flesh." She, therefore, left him without any compunction to the care of his governess and nurse, and begged to accompany her husband when he set out for Normandy. When they returned to St. Cloud in June, they found the boy well and happy, and in fine condition to make his first appearance in public on the 7th of June, for a formal baptism at Notre Dame.

On this occasion, the King of Rome, with his governess and nurse, occupied the place of honour in the procession in the great glass coach, his Imperial parents, sumptuously attired, following in a more modest equipage. The ceremony, which was as imposing as possible, took



place at 7 P. M., the slanting rays of the setting sun falling down upon the group at the font. As soon as the christening ceremony was over, the governess handed the infant to the Empress, who held him while the herald gave the signal for cheering, by crying loudly: "Long live the King of Rome!" But Marie Louise was always afraid of the baby, and held him so awkwardly, that Napoleon, fearing all the people might not have a good look at him, suddenly seized the boy himself, and held him high above his head in the dazzling sunbeam, his eye resting proudly on the tiny figure, the centre of attraction on this momentous occasion!

When the little King had been restored to his governess, he was taken to the Archiepiscopal palace, and from thence home, while Napoleon and Marie Louise attended the remainder of the service, and returned to the Tuileries by torchlight. This formal christening of the heir of the Empire was the signal for festivities of all kinds in Paris and elsewhere, culminating with a fête at St. Cloud, on the 23rd of June. For the next few weeks, however, the park was almost deserted; but throngs again invaded it for the Emperor's birthday celebration on the 15th of August. This was closely followed by the festivities for Marie Louise's twentieth birthday, which was celebrated at the Trianon, just before the Imperial couple set out for a tour in the north, in the course of which Marie Louise felt deeply injured because she had to part with her husband for a fortnight! She was, however, not alone, for all her household accompanied her, and she certainly had no time to mope, for she was sumptuously entertained in every town through which she passed. After Napoleon rejoined her in Brussels, they journeyed together through Holland, where Marie Louise drove into Broeck, — a town



whose pavement had never before been defiled by an animal's tread, — and where the Mayor opened for her express benefit the front door of his house, although such entrances were never used except for funerals.

From Holland the Imperial party proceeded to Düsseldorf and Cologne, returning to Paris to spend the winter of 1811–12 in the Tuileries, where the most rigid etiquette was still observed. There the Empress' life resumed its monotonous regularity. Awakening at eight, she breakfasted in bed, read her letters and played with her baby until nine, when she proceeded to her daily toilet. When this was concluded, she received the persons admitted to the "petites entrées," or morning receptions. At twelve, she lunched with the Emperor, who always had his child brought in, and held him on his knee while he ate. During this meal he played with the boy, dipping his fingers in the gravy, letting the child suck them, laughing uproariously over his grimaces and smeared face, and deriding the governess whenever she objected to any of these rash performances.

In fact, the Emperor adored his son, who, in spite of rough caresses, became devoted to him and was generally good-tempered when with him. People soon discovered that Napoleon was never so accessible as at this hour, when he seldom refused any petition, — a fact soon noted by those who craved favours. They, therefore, made Madame de Montesquiou their spokeswoman. She, and the Prefect of the Palace — who waited upon their Majesties — were the only outsiders present at these family parties, during which Marie Louise idly watched her husband play with the child whom she was afraid to handle, and who openly preferred his governess to her. But while she did not know how to amuse him, Marie Louise paid frequent visits to his nursery in the course of



her afternoon, which was devoted to music, drawing, and fancywork, varied by a two hours' ride or drive. Then, after dining alone with Napoleon, she generally played billiards or cards until she retired at ten or eleven.

Marie Louise, although not a fond mother, was, however, proud of her son's undeniable beauty and cleverness, and when Napoleon was not too busy, she often went with the boy to his study for brief calls. As the entrance of this study was forbidden to all outsiders, the nurse always placed the little King of Rome in her arms at the door, and Napoleon, knowing the insecurity of her grasp, invariably sprang forward as soon as he saw her to take the child himself. He was thus often seen at his desk, his son on his knee, or reading, while the child played or slept beside him, and sometimes both stretched out on the floor, the Emperor working out strategic problems with coloured blocks, which his son promptly knocked over with his tiny hands, mistaking them for mere toys set up for his amusement. When old enough to creep or walk, the King of Rome worked greater havoc in his father's learned combinations than the enemy at Leipzig or Waterloo; but the Emperor's equanimity was never ruffled, and with exhaustless patience he began his combinations anew as often as disturbed.

This gentle forbearance, so foreign to his nature, was almost invariable with Marie Louise and the boy, and his valet bears witness that, as "father and as husband, he could have served as example to all his subjects." Still, Marie Louise's quasi-indifference to the child often annoyed him; and when she insisted upon leaving the boy to accompany him on his journeys, he once impetuously informed her that she would never win the French people's hearts, if she did not show herself a better mother! It



THE IMPERIAL FAMILY, 1811–1812.
Menjaud.





is said that this unwelcome truth caused a noisy scene in the palace, such as had been frequent in the days of Josephine, but entirely unknown since Marie Louise had entered its doors. But although the Emperor swore in his anger that his wife should henceforth remain at home, he evidently changed his mind, for he took her with him to Dresden in May, sending his son to St. Cloud to be weaned.

This northward journey was momentous indeed, for the Emperor had summoned to Dresden so many of his friends and allies, that the court he held there is considered the culminating point of his imperial splendour. Marie Louise had the pleasure of meeting her father there, and the undeniable satisfaction of completely eclipsing her stepmother by the magnificence of her jewels and attire, in which she took great pride, although she had not Josephine's innate taste. Her display greatly incensed the Empress of Austria, who vainly tried to recover her old ascendency, and domineer over Marie Louise as of old; but while the latter loaded her stepmother with gifts, she obstinately refused to show her even the requisite deference, in spite of her husband's repeated injunctions. Thus, by her insolence, Marie Louise made a covert enemy of the Austrian Empress, and all Napoleon's paraded gallantry in escorting this lady to and fro, when she was carried through the long rooms of the palace in her sedan-chair, could not mitigate the ill-effect produced by Marie Louise's conduct. Still Napoleon hoped to blot out all remembrance of his wife's vanity by gifts, which he dispensed in such profusion during this sojourn, that he subsequently declared he had fairly "gorged her relatives with diamonds."

The Austrians were not the only royalties at Dresden, however, for the King of Prussia and the Czar of Russia



also came thither to confer with Napoleon. It is even said that it was here that the King shrewdly advised the Czar to avoid an open conflict with Napoleon, saying: "Attract the French into the heart of Russia, and let fatigue and cold conquer them!"

It was here, too, that Marie Louise, crossing the rooms with Napoleon one day, suddenly found herself face to face with the Count of Neipperg, to whom she addressed a few insignificant words, little suspecting the prominent part he would play in her life only two years later.

On the 29th of May, 1812, at three o'clock in the morning, Napoleon bade good-bye to his wife, kissing her effusively, and leaving her quite woe-begone at the prospect of their first prolonged separation. But her tears soon dried, for she was to meet her father at Prague before returning to Paris. Although, according to some authorities, the courtly and attentive Neipperg here acted as one of her chamberlains, and everything was done to please and amuse her, her vanity being gratified by being set above both father and stepmother, Marie Louise nevertheless missed Napoleon, as the following extracts from her letters prove: "I could be perfectly happy here were the Emperor with me, but without him I can know no happiness." "I have very good news of the Emperor, who is near Königsberg, and who is cheerful and satisfied. I shall be so only at the moment when I see the Emperor once more, and I would like to be able to purchase that moment at the expense of a few years of my life." "He writes to me very often, and every day that I receive a letter is a happy day for me. . . . Nothing can comfort me for the absence of the Emperor, not even the presence of all my family."

While she still pretended to be devoted to her family, Marie Louise was so deficient in tact, that she mortified

them frequently by an arrogant display of her possessions, and, no longer restrained by Napoleon, she drew such odious comparisons between her old and her new homes, that she sorely wounded German national pride.

This total lack of kindly feeling or diplomacy, was to have, before long, evil consequences which she little suspected when she left Prague on the 1st of July, escorted by her father, who was going to drink the waters of Carlsbad. There, father and daughter parted, the latter returning to St. Cloud, where she arrived on the 18th, welcomed by booming cannon, and where she found the King of Rome in radiant health and spirits. Three days later, while out driving with her boy, she received a charming ovation from the people, and on the 26th, held her first solitary official reception; for, although she had not been appointed Regent during her husband's absence, he had bidden her preside over all the court functions. These — except when it was a question of dazzling her family — were always somewhat of an ordeal for her, and, in spite of much practice, she never got rid of a certain timidity, which always made her appear cold and awkward, and contrasted unfavourably with Josephine's graceful desire to please. But Marie Louise, though cold, was undoubtedly dignified, and however weary of speeches and representation, she was far too thoroughly imbued with a sense of the requirements of her position to shirk any of her official duties. Still, she felt undeniably lonely during this first prolonged separation from her husband, and wrote to her father that she found it "most painful," adding: "I have scarcely courage enough to refrain from pitying myself."

Napoleon had left his wife well surrounded, but while her boy was not the absorbing delight he would have been to a more devoted mother, she was quite



proud of him, for she wrote: "Every day he becomes handsomer and stronger, he can already walk alone; he has fifteen teeth, but has not yet begun to talk."

She commissioned Gérard to paint the picture of this charming child, which, when finished, was forwarded to Russia, where the Emperor spent his birthday in the midst of the army, and where it reached him on the eve of the battle of Borodino. Such was the Emperor's impatience to behold this new effigy of his idolised son, that he could scarcely wait until the box was unpacked, and, seizing the picture, set it up with his own hands on a chair before him. Then he openly gloated over the boy, who was represented playing with a cup and ball, to which the painter had artfully given an illusive resemblance to a globe and sceptre, thus enhancing the whole representation by a subtle touch of allegory. Napoleon was so proud of this portrait that he called in all of his staff to view it, and said: "Gentlemen, you may be sure that if my son were fifteen years old, he would be here in person among so many brave men, and not in effigy only."

Then, longing to share his joy with all the army, he had the picture placed in front of his tent, where it was stared at with all the open-mouthed admiration that even the grim old grenadiers felt for the ideally beautiful child of their beloved chief. On the morrow, when the battle was imminent, this innocent child-face seemed out of place amid the coming carnage, so Napoleon entrusted it to an officer, saying gently: "Take it away and guard it carefully; he sees a field of battle too soon." But when he arrived in Moscow, the picture was again unpacked, and placed by his order, in his bedroom.

Although the Russian campaign turned out far differently from what he had expected, Napoleon kept the



NAPOLEON AND THE KING OF ROME.

Steuben.





Parisians ignorant of the real state of affairs, by ordering a solemn Te Deum at Notre Dame, which Marie Louise attended in state. Just then, however, the French army was preparing to leave the devastated city of Moscow, to begin its fatal retreat, and the tidings of disaster, carefully concealed, gradually leaked out, and were already pretty well-known when, three days later, the famous Malet conspiracy took place.

Marie Louise, in her luxurious chamber at St. Cloud, and Napoleon, spending a cheerless night in his travelling carriage, vainly trying to devise plans to cheat fate and save his men, little suspected that by means of forged papers, a former lunatic would convince some French officers that the Emperor was dead, arrest officials, and come within an ace of overthrowing the whole Imperial government! But this is what really occurred, and instead of immediately proclaiming the King of Rome, the officials lost their heads, and had not the mistake been discovered in time, a new revolution would surely then have occurred in France.

It was the news of this attempt and his aversion to witness suffering he could not remedy, that suddenly determined Napoleon to leave his army in Murat's charge, and return in haste to the capital, where his presence was imperatively needed, and where none but his strong hands would be able to hold the reins of the government when the people learned the full extent of their losses in the Russian campaign. That return journey was made incognito, at the utmost speed, with scarcely a pause, save at Warsaw and Dresden, where Napoleon wrote to the Austrian Emperor to announce his return. Pressing on, he next crossed the Rhine, and on reaching French soil determinedly cried: "I am still the Emperor."

His carriage failing him near home, Napoleon drove



up to the Tuileries in an ordinary stage-coach, at half-past eleven at night, on the 18th of December, 1812, seven months after his confident departure for the north. Only one of his aides was with him, so the belated travellers were not only refused admittance, but had considerable difficulty in convincing the guards of their identity, and in effecting an entrance into the palace. Marie Louise, suffering from a heavy cold, had retired in a depressed mood that evening, and her lady-in-waiting was about to lock all the doors, when two men enveloped in furs suddenly entered into her room. To spring forward and prevent their entrance into the Empress' sacred chamber was the work of a moment, and she was about to summon the guards, when one of the intruders flung aside his cloak, revealing the characteristic face and form of the Emperor! Even while she gasped in speechless surprise at the unexpected apparition of the man whom all still deemed in the frozen depths of Russia, Napoleon passed hurriedly on into the room of Marie Louise, who, alarmed by the sounds next door, had already risen and donned her wrapper.

The official journal duly announced the Emperor's return on the next day, and called a council at the Tuileries, where Napoleon took a high hand with his officials, and indignantly demanded what the Malet conspiracy meant? He also took them so roughly to task for sundry errors, that he managed to cast the blame of the Russian failure entirely upon them and upon the inclement weather. But on the morrow he seemed to have recovered all his serenity, spoke of the disasters his army had encountered as of a mere trifle, and again mentioned the coronation of the Empress and of the King of Rome, which he declared should take place early in spring.

Marie Louise

After being seven months apart, Napoleon and Marie Louise were now almost inseparable, and the Emperor seeming more devoted than ever to his little son, who could now both walk and talk, and who often ran away from his attendants to go in quest of his favourite playfellow. Many charming anecdotes are told of this engaging little Prince, which, viewed in the light of subsequent events, have become of permanent interest. To teach the little man obedience to nursery rules, Napoleon, it seems, gave strict orders that he should never be admitted into his apartments if he came thither alone, and Madame d'Abrantès relates the following charming scene in her Mémoires. One morning the little King of Rome came trotting along the corridor, and, looking up at the tall officer on guard, imperiously ordered: "Open the door for me. I want to see papa!"

The officer, true to his instructions, answered gently but firmly: "Sire, I cannot open the door for your Majesty."

"Why not?" demanded the little autocrat. "I am the little King."

At the gentle reminder: "But your Majesty is all alone," the golden-haired cherub seemed somewhat nonplussed; but his governess appearing a moment later, he seized her hand, and thus protected, stamped his tiny foot and cried: "Open the door! The King wishes it!"

This time, all being in order, the tall officer flung the door wide, solemnly announcing: "The King of Rome!"

Idolised by his father and the people, the King of Rome was brought up with judicious care by his governess, who, perceiving his violent temper when crossed in any way, once ordered all the blinds of the nursery



closed while he lay kicking and screaming on the floor. The child, surprised at the sudden darkness, suddenly stopped his piercing cries to inquire why the room was so dark, and she quietly answered: "So you should not be heard, Sire. The French would never want you for their king if you were naughty, and I love you too dearly to let them hear or see you in such a rage."

The child, awed by her tone, now timidly inquired: "Did I scream very loud?" and when the governess gravely answered: "Yes, you did," he asked whether she thought he had been heard by the people? He was almost broken-hearted, therefore, when she sadly declared: "I fear they did;" and could not be comforted until he had crept into her lap and won her forgiveness by promising: "I'll never do so again, Mama Quiou. Forgive me." He was so sensitive, proud, and intelligent, that this promise was well kept, and Mama Quiou's lesson made a deep impression upon his childish brain, besides teaching him an important lesson in self-control.

The worst punishment which could be inflicted upon him, was to forbid his looking at the soldiers mounting guard in the Tuileries' yard; and when a lady once went to call on his governess, and found him scowling in a corner, he resentfully pointed to "Mama Quiou," saying: "She will not let me look at my papa's soldiers."

This firmness on the part of his governess was, however, a great blessing to the baby King of Rome, who, surrounded by courtiers, and naturally high-tempered, would have been simply unbearable if spoiled.

Even Napoleon, indulgent as he was to this only child, was anxious to train him properly, and when the boy once ran into his study and clambered up into his lap without heeding some gentlemen assembled in council there, — he had been early taught to kiss his hand and

make a bow, — Napoleon sternly pushed him aside, and said: "You did not make your bow, Sire! Come, greet these gentlemen properly." The baby King now ducked his curly head and kissed his dimpled hand with infantile grace, and the proud father, catching him up in his arms, joyfully cried: "Well, gentlemen, I trust no one will ever say I neglect my son's education. You see he already knows his manners!"

Aware of his deep love for this child, many petitioners tried to win a hearing through him; so the King of Rome soon learned that the rolls of paper they held were intended for him. He, therefore, collected them eagerly, and tied them all up in a bundle to carry into his father's study, where he proudly delivered them all into his keeping. Once, looking out of his window, he was deeply impressed by the sight of a small boy in deep mourning among the petitioners. In answer to his many questions, his governess explained that the little boy was all dressed in black because his father had died in Spain, fighting for the Emperor, and that he was now asking for a pension, so that he and his mamma should have enough to eat. This pitiful story so impressed the baby King that he eagerly seized the roll of paper the boy tendered. But, instead of tying it up in the bundle with the others, as usual, he kept it carefully apart. On the morrow, when delivering the petitions, he gave Napoleon the bundle first, and then, climbing up into his lap, cried: "Here, papa, here is the petition of a little boy. His papa died for your sake, and his mamma asks for a pension because she is very poor and feels so badly." Needless to state, that petition was granted!

The Emperor loved to have his boy with him indoors or out, and sometimes played blindman's buff with him on the lawn, where an occasional tumble called forth



peals of laughter from both. Sometimes, too, he would give the little King his hat and sword, and lie in the grass, watching him strut to and fro in his borrowed trappings. But often the sight of this little child called forth remarks such as the one he made to the Duke of Gaëte at Compiègne, saying: "Behold a child who would have been far happier to have been born a private individual with a moderate income. He is destined to bear a heavy burden upon his shoulders!" In speaking thus, Napoleon was, of course, referring to the child's probable destiny, so different, after all, from his real career!

Before long, the King of Rome grew so accustomed to his father's rough handling, — which he bore without a whimper, — and to his queer caresses and noisy demonstrations, that his governess felt no fear whatever when the Emperor once took him to a grand review, and, setting him astride his horse, in front of him, presented him thus to the soldiers, who gave him a rousing cheer. When Marie Louise inquired on their return whether the child had been frightened, Napoleon scornfully exclaimed: "Afraid! Of course not! He knew he was in the midst of his father's friends!" This reply, coming to the ears of the soldiers, filled their hearts with just pride, and when called upon to cry: "Vive le roi!" (Long live the King) two years later, many of them used to cry heartily: "Vive le roi de Rome et son petit papa!" (Long live the King of Rome and his little father), the conclusion being, of course, only muttered behind their bristling mustaches.

As Napoleon always tried to keep his young wife with him as much as possible, she rode to Melun with him for a hunt, and from thence to Fontainebleau, where they spent a week with Pius VII. A prisoner, the Pope was here induced to sign the second Concordat, and Marie

Louise wrote to her father: "We have been at Fontainebleau for the past six days. The Emperor and Pope have settled the affairs of Christendom in the very best way. The Pope seems very happy. Since yesterday morning he has appeared quite joyful and gracious; he signed the treaty in less than a quarter of an hour." But when the poor Pope realised how cleverly he had been tricked, he recalled this treaty, saying manfully: "No, I will not give up my conscience to recover my crown! I cannot!"

Meantime, new war clouds, looming up on the horizon, prevented the coronation of Marie Louise and of the King of Rome, which had been set for the 7th of March, 1813, and also ended the work on the baby King's new palace on the site of the present Trocadéro. Instead, Napoleon prepared for war, investing his young wife with the title of Regent before he departed. Of course, this title was chiefly complimentary, for nothing was done without Napoleon's personal knowledge, and his trained officials were all at their posts; but the new dignity pleased and occupied Marie Louise, who proudly wrote to her father: "You can readily understand how much I am flattered by this new proof of the Emperor's confidence."

Mindful of the Malet conspiracy, the Emperor this time arranged everything so that the government could run on smoothly even if he were killed, fixing the Empress' dowry at four million francs, and appointing the Elysée and Trianons as her dower houses. All his measures having thus been taken, he set out, but although absent, kept up so lively a correspondence with the Tuileries, that he knew every detail of what was going on there, and was pleased to learn how well the Regent acquitted herself at her first official reception. Still, he was no longer an indulgent bridegroom, and did not hesi-

tate to criticise his wife whenever her conduct did not suit him, as the following curt letter plainly shows:

MADAME AND DEAR FRIEND: I have received the letter in which you tell me that you received the Archchancellor in bed. My intention is that under no circumstances, and under no pretext, you should receive any one in bed. It is not proper until one is past thirty.

(Signed) NAPOLEON.

Meantime, Napoleon had refused to sign a treaty reducing France to her old dimensions, and not content with the victories of Lützen and Bauzen, postponed treating for peace in the hope that a third victory would enable him to secure more favourable terms. The flags taken from the enemy in these two battles were sent on to Paris, where a Te Deum was sung, and where Marie Louise then received such an ovation that she wrote to her father: "I came home quite moved at the affection of the people for the Emperor. Never did the French cheer him more heartily. He is conqueror and peacemaker!"

Marie Louise was wrong, however; Napoleon was no peacemaker, but he made use of a brief armistice to summon her to Mayence, wishing to show the Germans how well she was treated, and how devotedly she loved him. Every detail of this journey was carefully prescribed by Napoleon, who kept Marie Louise with him there for a week. But while she was pleased to see her husband, and outwardly as majestic and serene as ever, she was sorely troubled at the possibility of a speedy rupture between France and Austria. Still, even this prospect did not weaken her affection for her husband, to whom she clung tearfully at the moment of parting, and who tenderly embraced her in the presence of the assembled court.



Marie Louise

The Emperor having gone, Marie Louise sailed down the Rhine in the Prince of Nassau's yacht, and, after visiting sundry points of interest along the storied river, landed at Cologne, and passing through Aix-la-Chapelle, returned to St. Cloud. She arrived there on the 9th of August, 1813, and was met, as she stepped out of her carriage, by her little son, who was thriving, and seemed to have grown even during her brief absence. This lovely child was now a great centre of attraction, and many people came to St. Cloud on purpose to see him drive around in his dainty gilt carriage, drawn by two snow-white sheep.

The very day she reached home, Marie Louise went out driving with him, and both were cheered enthusiastically, and on the 15th of August she returned to Paris for the official celebration of the Emperor's birthday. There were, as usual, solemn services, receptions, congratulations, speeches, illuminations, plays, and fireworks, but this time the Empress had to appear alone on the Tuileries balcony to acknowledge the plaudits of the crowd, and therefore could not consider the occasion as festive as usual. Marie Louise could not tarry very long in Paris, for her own saint's day was to be celebrated by the official inauguration of the great basin at Cherbourg. A heavy cold caught on this journey somewhat marred her enjoyment of this celebration, but still did not prevent a joyful return to Paris, for the news of the victory of Dresden had roused great popular enthusiasm, and kindled a lively hope that the Emperor would soon make peace. This joyful anticipation was, however, not to be fulfilled, and after being a whole week without tidings, Marie Louise suddenly learned that her father had joined the coalition, and that it behooved her to go in state to the Senate, to appeal to French patriotism, so that the

present crisis might be faced successfully. Marie Louise obeyed, personally delivering the address which Napoleon had composed for her, and which concluded with the words:

"Sharing for four years my husband's most intimate thoughts, I know by what emotions he would be torn on a disgraced throne and wearing a dishonoured crown. Frenchmen, your country, your honour, appeal to you!"

This speech, made by so young an Empress, was enthusiastically received, the Senate decreeing the immediate drafting of two hundred and eighty thousand men. A few days later, Marie Louise received one of Napoleon's doctored bulletins, twenty flags taken from the enemy, and the following official letter dated Frankfort, November 1, 1813.

MADAME AND VERY DEAR WIFE: — I send you twenty flags taken by our armies at the battles of Wachau, Leipzig, and Hanau. This is an homage which I take pleasure in offering you. I desire you to see in it a mark of my great satisfaction with your conduct during the regency which I entrusted to you. This letter having no other purpose, I pray God to keep you in his safe and holy keeping.

(Signed) NAPOLEON.

But the battle of Leipzig, so cursorily mentioned in the above missive, was anything but a victory, and the flags were sent on merely to pave the way for the Emperor's picturesque return a few days later. Marie Louise, hearing two carriages drive up suddenly one evening, ran in girlish haste to meet her husband, whose kindness to her had been all the more marked since her father's sudden and unexpected defection. Indeed, Napoleon had felt so sure that his marriage with Marie Louise made such a move on Austria's part impossible,



NAPOLEON RECEIVING THE PORTRAIT OF HIS SON, 1812.
Bellangé.



that he was entirely unprepared for it, — a grievous mistake which was to cost him his crown.

But however sore he might feel over what he did not hesitate to term Austrian treachery, Napoleon was careful never to utter a word against the Emperor of Austria in Marie Louise's presence, laid no check upon her correspondence, — which continued almost as regularly as if the countries were still at peace, — and was unusually quick to resent anything which sounded like a criticism of his wife. The news of the crushing defeat he had suffered at Leipzig could not, however, remain hidden; but although the Emperor still seemed undaunted, Marie Louise was sorely depressed and often in tears, and the people openly begged for peace. This longing extended from hut to palace, and Napoleon, stealing into his son's nursery one evening, overheard the little one pray: "Dear God, inspire papa with a wish to make peace, for the happiness of France and of us all." Napoleon smiled when he heard this childish prayer; but he made no remark, for he well knew that Madame de Montesquiou would do what she thought right, regardless of his displeasure, and, besides, he also felt that the boy's prayer was only a faint echo of countless others breathed all over his realm. But his pride forbade his yielding to the general desire until he had retrieved his recent losses, and he longed to enhance his glory by new triumphs. Still he could not but perceive that the anniversary of Austerlitz and of his coronation was not celebrated with as much enthusiasm as usual, and in his speech at the opening of the Legislative Assembly on the 19th of December, he felt it necessary to remind the people of their duty to their country, proudly concluding: "I am confident that the French will ever be worthy of themselves and of me."

Two days later, the invasion of France began, and as popular dissatisfaction became more marked, and Napoleon's perplexities and work increased, he grew weary and irritable. But while he sometimes admitted in private that he had been too prone to war in the past, he hotly defended his policy in public. Still, in the state reception in the Tuileries on the 1st of January, 1814, he expressed a firm intention soon to conclude peace as the people wished, even if he were forced to sacrifice his dearest ambition of making France the greatest power in the world.

Even in the midst of perplexities which prevented his devoting more than three hours to rest, and of the anxieties which he did not strive to conceal from his old friends or from Josephine, Napoleon always wore a cheerful countenance before Marie Louise, encouraging her in the belief that his difficulties with Austria were merely temporary, and that a reconciliation would soon ensue. The fact was, however, that the situation was so precarious that he was very glad to be reconciled to his brothers Joseph and Louis, whom he now implored to stand by his wife and child should any evil befall him.

On the 24th of January, almost on the eve of his departure to check the invaders, Napoleon summoned the officers of the National Guard to the Hall of Marshals in the Tuileries. There he suddenly appeared before them, with the Empress and the King of Rome, solemnly placed them under their protection, and pointing to the wondering child concluded his speech by saying: "I entrust him to your care, gentlemen, I entrust him to the loving care of my faithful city of Paris." The unexpected presence of a young woman and of an innocent child, and the eloquent falter in the



Emperor's voice when he mentioned his wife and son, touched the chord which vibrates so strongly in every human heart, and one and all solemnly swore to be loyal to the trust he reposed in them, and to defend his family as faithfully as their own.

Before leaving, the Emperor again appointed his wife Regent, with Joseph as her main adviser, giving that brother minute instructions how to proceed in every emergency. Then, two days after the moving scene in the Hall of Marshals, the Emperor left the Tuileries, at 7 A. M., bidding an affectionate farewell to the wife and son whom he was never to see again!

Although they had been married nearly four years, Marie Louise had only spent two years and eight months with her husband; but she wept profusely on bidding him adieu, while she felt secretly aggrieved to perceive how the mere prospect of a struggle invigorated him, making him appear ten years younger. Still, her position as Regent, prevented her devoting much time to moping or seclusion, for on the very next day she had to receive a deputation from the National Guard, headed by General Moncey, bearing a loyal address which they requested her to forward to the Emperor, so that he might know he could rely upon their faithful services. The Empress, having been notified of their coming, had prepared a long and touching appeal to their patriotism, but the Archchancellor would not allow her to deliver this, lest the people should grow frightened and deem the situation more desperate than it was. Marie Louise, therefore, had to content herself with the customary dignified acknowledgment, which, however, only fostered the popular belief in her coldness and lack of sympathy.

In spite of protestations, it was nevertheless clear that the end could not be far away, unless a decided change soon



occurred; for many had already deserted the sinking Imperial cause, and others would soon follow. Successive important defections made Napoleon keenly realise that his worst fears might yet perchance be verified, and the enemy press on to the gates of Paris; but although he would now fain have made peace, the only conditions the coalition would grant seemed to him too humiliating to accept. When he next wrote to his brother, therefore, he emphatically renewed his instructions, that should he be either defeated or killed, Joseph must remove both Empress and King of Rome to Rambouillet, or some other place of safety, adding: "For my own part, I had rather my son should have his throat cut, than ever see him brought up in Vienna as an Austrian Prince; and I have high enough an opinion of the Empress to be sure that she shares these views as far as a woman and a mother can."

And yet Napoleon himself was not quite hopeless, for a new plan he had suddenly devised, brought about a series of small victories, which gave a brighter aspect to his fortunes. The news of these successes reached the Tuileries, when Joseph was reviewing the National Guards, who cheered madly when they heard it, to the great delight of the little King of Rome, gazing at them from his nursery window, and who now received a spontaneous ovation.

The flags captured at the recent engagements were sent to the capital, where the Minister of War publicly laid them at the Empress' feet. She received them graciously, answering his formal speech by saying: "It is with keen emotion that I behold these trophies which you present to me in obedience to the orders of the Emperor, my august spouse. In my eyes they are pledges of the safety of the country. May all the



French rise in arms on seeing them! May they gather in throngs around their sovereign and father! Their courage, directed by his genius, will soon accomplish the deliverance of our territory."

In his anxiety to leave nothing undone which might save the country, Napoleon now wrote a very clever letter to the Emperor of Austria, clearly explaining the position, and appealing so strongly to his sense of honour and fatherly affections, that Francis was almost persuaded to withdraw from the coalition and sign a separate peace with his son-in-law.

Marie Louise, also, strove to detach her father from the coalition, and although she had never interfered in political matters before, now wrote: "It is poor policy to force a disgraceful peace upon us, for it cannot last. Imagine, my dear father, in what a state I am. It would be a blow I could not survive. Therefore, I beseech you, dear father, remember me and my son. You know how much I love you, and how strongly I flatter myself that I enjoy your paternal affection. . . . It depends upon you only to end my anxiety. You will do so, won't you?"

But this letter was of no avail either, and while the Regency considered the peace proposals made by the Congress of Chatillon, — which Napoleon scorned, — he won a new victory. Joseph now implored him to make use of this advantage to secure peace through his wife's intercession, but he proudly answered: "I do not wish to be protected by my wife; this idea would spoil her and divide us. What is the use of such talk? Let her lead her own life; speak to her only about what she must know in order to affix her signature; and, above all, avoid everything which could make her think I desire to be protected by her or by her father. . . . Be-

sides, all that can only disturb her and injure her excellent disposition."

Napoleon fought his last battle in this fatal campaign at Arcis-sur-Aube, and, finding the day going against him, did all he could to be killed, even riding up to a bursting shell, which, exploding, slew his horse but left him unharmed. This disappointed him greatly, for while he knew the bulk of the army still idolised him, and would follow him blindly, he fully realised that his officers were weary of warfare and would soon desert his cause.

Meantime, Marie Louise had remained in Paris anxiously awaiting letters and instructions from Napoleon which failed to appear, and constantly dreading to receive tidings of his death, for she knew he would not be willing to survive his downfall. By great mischance, a letter in which the Emperor described his last plan for the safety of the capital, fell into the hands of the enemy, who were thus enabled to frustrate his aims entirely. This letter was then forwarded to the Empress, who perused with terror the ominous sentence: "This step saves me or ruins me."

She was now in a sad predicament. Young and inexperienced herself, she felt no confidence in her husband's brothers, although their insight at that time proved clearer than Napoleon's, for already, on the 16th of March, Louis wrote to his brother, saying: "If your Majesty does not sign peace, you may be sure that your government will not last more than three weeks. It needs only a little coolness and common-sense to judge of the state of affairs." This truthful yet tactless letter only made Napoleon still more reluctant to yield, for he never could brook adverse criticism, however well meant.

In her perplexity, the young Empress — she was not

yet twenty-two — called a council at the Tuileries, on the 28th of March, 1814, and there asked the advice of many men of note besides Joseph, Talleyrand, and Cambacérès. But opinions varied greatly, and while some advocated the young Regent's taking her son in her arms and appealing to the people, like Marie Thérèse, others urged her instant departure from Paris. They were hotly discussing the pros and cons of this question, when Joseph suddenly produced Napoleon's letter of February 8th, and a later missive dated March 16th, wherein he said: "You must not let the Empress and the King of Rome fall into the enemy's hands. . . . Do not abandon my son, and remember that I had rather know him in the Seine, than in the hands of the enemies of France. The fate of Astyanax, a prisoner among the Greeks, has always seemed to me the most melancholy in history!"

Marie Louise, trained to implicit obedience to parental or marital commands, no sooner heard these letters read, than she declared no choice remained, and that she would leave with her son at eight o'clock on the morrow, unless contrary orders arrived in the interval, adding: "Even if I were to fall into the Seine, as the Emperor said, I should not hesitate for a moment about leaving. A wish which he has formally expressed, is for me an order."

So far, Marie Louise had behaved like a model wife, mother, and Frenchwoman; but the people, who could not forget that she was an Austrian, were suspicious of her, and the first rumours of her coming departure awakened grave apprehensions. All that night the palace was closely observed, and the watchers soon perceived by the lights flitting incessantly to and fro behind the windows, that Senate and court were pre-

paring to accompany the Empress and King of Rome. Not only were the most important papers, the principal art treasures, the crown jewels and court garments hastily packed for removal, but a treasure of about ten millions in specie formed part of the Empress' baggage train.

At 7 A. M., in the dull grey light of a March morning, the packing was all finished, and Marie Louise and her son arrayed for the journey. But although she had already donned her brown travelling suit, and the carriages were at the door, ready loaded, the Empress lingered, loath to depart, and still hoping that the Emperor would send more definite orders.

The officers of the National Guard, who had so solemnly promised to defend her and the King of Rome, now appeared to urge her to remain with them, justly alleging that her departure might create a panic among the people, who considered her presence a guarantee of safety, and would remain true to the Emperor as long as she was in their midst. These arguments, backed by extravagant protestations of devotion, shook the Empress' resolution for a moment, and while her chief advisers again excitedly discussed what she had better do, she withdrew to her chamber. The nervous strain she had undergone, proved too great for a character not steeled by education, circumstances, or age, and, petulantly flinging off her wraps, Marie Louise sank into a chair, buried her face in her hands, and wept helplessly, crying: "Goodness! If they would only make up their minds and end this agony!"

The three-year-old King, who had been brought to his mother equipped for the journey, but whom the unwonted bustle and noise troubled and confused, caught a word here and there which mysteriously alarmed him.



An unusually precocious child, he began to ponder over them, and when, shortly before twelve, a move was finally made, he suddenly burst into a passion of tears, and, clinging convulsively to doors and railings, obstinately refused to leave the palace, screaming in his terror: "Don't go to Rambouillet. It is an ugly old castle. Let us stay here. I don't want to leave my house. I don't want to go away. Now that papa is absent, I am master here!"

Reasoning, bribery, and persuasion proving equally unavailing, one of the officers seized the struggling child to carry him down to the waiting carriage, his governess following closely, to unclasp the baby fingers which clutched frantically at every object in reach. This stormy scene, on the part of a child whom they had never seen otherwise than gentle and obedient, struck many of the spectators as an evil omen, and since then many people have wondered whether this vehement protest was not prophetic instinct on the part of the baby King of Rome, who was leaving for ever the palace where his birth had been welcomed with rapture three years before.

It was raining dismally, and when the long line of carriages drove slowly away from the Tuileries on that 29th of March, it really did look like "the funeral of an empire." Talleyrand, who was so soon to turn open traitor, made the cynical remark: "Well, so that's the way this glorious reign was to end. To finish his career like an adventurer, instead of ending peacefully upon the greatest of thrones, and after having given his name to his century. . . . What an end!"

Marie Louise, driving away in the rain with her reluctant son, — although she did not then suspect that all was over, — must have thought this departure offered



a sad contrast to her arrival, four years before, at Napoleon's side, for the religious marriage at the Louvre. But anything seemed preferable to the agonising suspense of the last few hours, and the journey continued peaceably, the people staring at the string of carriages in apathetic wonder or hopeless despair. After a night spent at Rambouillet, Marie Louise, alarmed by new tidings, went on to Chartres, Vendôme, and Blois, where she arrived on the 2nd of April. Being joined there by her councillors and all the officers of the state, she presided over the Regency meetings with praiseworthy regularity, although by this time even she, in her ignorance, could perceive that matters were pretty hopeless. She, therefore, spent some very anxious days and nights at Blois, hovering between hope and despair, anxiously awaiting definite instructions from the Emperor, and issuing her last proclamation, which ended thus: "You will be faithful to your oath. You will heed the voice of a princess who was entrusted to your fidelity, and who glories in being a Frenchwoman. My son was less sure of your hearts in the day of our prosperity."

But, alas! all was already over in France for her, because, in spite of General Moncey's heroic defence, Paris had been forced to surrender. The Emperor, hastening to his capital to make a last stand, learned at the same hour the surrender of the city and the departure of the Empress, both of which pieces of news surprised him greatly. Still he was glad to hear that Marie Louise was safe, and cried: "Yes, I wanted her to go, for Heaven knows what her inexperience might not have induced her to do!"

Nevertheless, he still deluded himself with the belief that a sudden, bold move might yet save him, and sent



THE KING OF ROME, 1814.





one of his faithful followers to Paris to treat with the enemy, while he withdrew to Fontainebleau, where he was to remain from March 31st to April 20th, and suffer all "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

Marie Louise at Blois, surrounded by her household, maintained the appearance of a court where the usual etiquette was rigidly preserved, and none dared tell her of the successive defections which left her husband defenceless, and of the fatal effect her own flight had produced in the capital. On Palm Sunday, April 3rd, the Empress attended Mass, and on the selfsame day Napoleon wrote urging her to implore her father and Metternich to support the Regency, advising her to flee with her son to Emperor Francis, who would surely never suffer them to be robbed of their crown.

The next day, on the 4th of April, yielding to the advice of his few remaining friends, Napoleon signed his abdication at Fontainebleau, on the round mahogany table which bears an inscription to that effect, and which is still shown to visitors. This paper — his first abdication in favour of his son — stated that "The Allied Powers having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon was the sole obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he is ready to descend from the throne, to leave France, and even to die for the good of his country, inseparable from the rights of his son, from those of the Empress' Regency, and the maintenance of the laws of the Empire. Done at Fontainebleau, April 4th, 1814."

But although Napoleon believed the Empire could yet be saved for his son, it was already too late, for Marmont had deserted his cause, and the Bourbons had been summoned back to France, thanks to the machi-



nations of the royalist party, now openly headed by Talleyrand. The very day that Napoleon signed his abdication, Marie Louise wrote to her father, saying: "Our position is so gloomy and alarming that my son and I have no other refuge than you. I am sure that at this moment you alone can aid us. I am convinced that you will listen to my prayer, and will refuse to sacrifice to England and Russia my peace and the interests of your grandson. . . . Paris would have been defended more seriously, if it had not been thought that it was attacked by you, and that you would not abandon your daughter and your grandson. Hence, I entrust myself to your hands, dear father; I am sure that you will save us from this terrible situation. . . . I entrust to you the safety of what I hold dearest in the world, a son too young to know sorrow or grief."

Poor Marie Louise could not go straight to her father as Napoleon advised, for she did not then know where he was, and feared to fall into the hands of the Russian or Prussian troops. Her only hope was none the less in that weak-minded father, who had already once sacrificed his daughter to his enemy, and who, thanks to his advisers, was now about to sacrifice both her and his grandson. In fact, the Austrians cynically remarked when some one mentioned Marie Louise: "The marriage, the marriage, politics made it, politics could undo it."

Although not aware, as yet, of all the perils of her position, Marie Louise was very anxious, and spent days and nights in tears, regretting having consented to leave the capital, and crying: "Those who thought I should have stayed in Paris were right; my father's soldiers would, perhaps, not have driven me away." But when some of her followers advised her to return to the capital before it was too late, she dared not follow this advice.





Besides, every once in a while, she wondered whether it were not her duty to join the Emperor at Fontainebleau, and she once said: "My place is at the Emperor's side when he is so unhappy. I desire to go to him, and I shall be happy anywhere, provided I am with him."

But these impulses, encouraged by Madame de Montesquiou and Madame de Montebello, were never of long duration, and Marie Louise, who had never been obliged to make up her own mind, left alone with people who had no authority over her, wavered and wept, and did nothing. She was, however, willing and ready to do as she was told, and openly wondered that Napoleon should abandon her thus to her own devices. There were, however, three good reasons for this conduct: first, he fancied that if left entirely to the Emperor of Austria, Marie Louise and his son would receive better treatment at the Allies' hands than if he interfered. Second, he dreaded seeing Marie Louise, whom he rightly considered a fair-weather wife, and, in the third place, he "wished to remain free for the plan he was considering." Marie Louise, who suspected that this might be some bold move which her presence might hinder or jeopardise, dared not move, and therefore passively awaited her fate.

Hers was indeed a trying position for so young a woman, but like most placid, unenergetic natures, there was, nevertheless, a vein of obstinacy in her character; it suddenly revealed itself when her Council tried to make her remove to Orleans, so as to rally the remains of the Imperial army around her, and perchance even yet retrieve all that had been lost. Her brothers-in-law then insisted more vehemently than usual, and finally threatened to remove her and her son by force; but Marie Louise fled to her apartment, and, sending for De Bausset



hysterically, cried: "My two brothers and their arch-chancellor are there, in that room. They have just told me I must leave Blois at once, and that if I resist they will have me put into the carriage with my son!"

Seeing her agitation, the Prefect of the Palace quietly and respectfully asked: "May I ask your Majesty what is your wish?"

"I wish to remain here, and await the Emperor's instructions," answered the unhappy Empress. So De Bausset immediately declared that he would uphold her, and went to inform Joseph and Louis that his mistress would not leave. As the enemy were advancing rapidly, several of the senators now bade the Empress farewell, and the semblance of a government, which had been rigidly maintained at Blois until the 7th of April, was then allowed to lapse.

On Good Friday, April 8th, only three hours after Marie Louise's final refusal to accompany the fleeing courtiers, the Russian General Schouwaloff entered Blois with his troops, ostensibly to protect the Empress and King of Rome, but in reality to guard them closely, prevent their joining the Emperor, and escort them on to Orleans. But before leaving Blois, Marie Louise again wrote to her father and husband, and concealed upon her own and her attendants' persons the crown-jewels, which she feared might else be stolen on the way. Then, accompanied by her son, Napoleon's mother, two of his brothers and their wives, Marie Louise set out, under foreign escort, for Orleans, where she was still received as a sovereign, but where she soon perceived that her sway was over, for her treasures and crown-jewels were confiscated, as well as much of her own private property.

On Easter Sunday, Marie Louise sadly attended Mass

at Orleans, and after the service bade farewell to the Bonapartes, and to most of her attendants, who tried to cheer her by congratulating her upon the just received news that the Allies promised to confer upon her the sovereignty of Parma. But Marie Louise's heart was sorely oppressed, and her health seriously affected by the anxieties of the past few months. Besides, her suspense concerning Napoleon was harder to bear than any certainty, and even Méneval, her secretary, was full of forebodings, for he had received a letter wherein Napoleon hinted that he intended to commit suicide. Méneval, who had been the Emperor's secretary for years, and who was deeply attached to his master, now began a correspondence with his successor, Baron Fain, who really wrote under Napoleon's dictation, although, for safety's sake, the letters did not bear his signature.

This daily correspondence, however, only increased Marie Louise's perplexities, for while Napoleon said his wife and son should join him on the way to Elba, — which was henceforth to be his sole kingdom, — he gave no definite instructions how they were to do so. One of these letters states: "The Emperor is very well, for, as I have already told you, his health is not affected by his moral sufferings. He hopes to hear that the Empress is becoming consoled, and that she expects to be happy in the humble condition to which she is reduced. The Emperor is glad that the Empress is to have Parma and Piacenza, because her independence is thereby assured, and she will have the most beautiful country in the world to live in, if she grows tired of the rocks of Elba; while Elba is a retreat that can suit the Emperor only, for he no longer wishes to rule anywhere."

At first, Marie Louise seemed eager to join Napoleon; but the talk of the people around her already began to

undermine this resolution, and commenced the work of alienating her affections from Napoleon, — a work planned by Metternich and Talleyrand, who were soon to pursue it with more vigour. Only a few people around her now ventured to remind her of her duty, and, as neither Napoleon nor her father sent any definite instructions, she felt as helpless as a cork tossed amid the waves, and cried in despair: "I am really to be pitied! Some advise me to go; others to stay. I write to the Emperor, and he does not answer my questions. He tells me to write to my father, but what will my father say, after he has allowed me to be treated with such contumely? I am abandoned, and I commit myself to Providence. It advised me wisely when it counselled me to become a canoness. I should never have come to this country. . . . Go to the Emperor? But I cannot go without my son, who is only safe with me. . . . On the other hand, if the Emperor fears an attack on his life, — which is very probable, — and has to take to flight, the embarrassment I should cause him might make him fall into the hands of the foe, who, I have no doubt, desire his death. I don't know what to do; I am broken-hearted. . . . I can understand that people should hate me in this country, yet I am not to blame. Why did my father marry me off, if he entertained the plans he is now carrying out?"

Poor Marie Louise was then indeed in sad straits, and she certainly cannot be blamed if she did not possess either the firmness or energy necessary to meet her perplexing fate. On the 11th, she sent another letter to the Emperor, who exclaimed upon reading it: "Dear Louise," but again avoided giving her any definite answer. The poor man had many perplexities of his own, for that day Caulaincourt brought him a treaty,

which he refused to sign, because he considered it simply degrading. Such was Napoleon's mental suffering, that in the middle of that night he tried to execute a long-cherished plan, and attempted suicide by swallowing some poison which his own physician had given him in Russia. But the drug had lost its strength, and merely made him so violently ill that he had to rouse his attendants. At first, thinking death near, he gave them a few last messages; but finally, seeing he would continue to live, he bitterly cried: "Everything has betrayed me, I am condemned to go on living." This despondent mood soon changed, however. The man whom no misfortune could daunt for any length of time, soon persuaded himself that fate must have further designs upon him, and therefore resigned himself to live, saying: "God does not want me to die."

Then, ashamed of this cowardly attempt to escape his misfortunes, he enjoined such strict silence upon his followers, that several insisted as long as he lived that the reported attempt at suicide was merely a violent attack of indigestion, such as had frequently affected him. Although pale and weak, Napoleon rose the next morning as usual, and amid the respectful silence of a few faithful friends signed the treaty he abhorred. This done, he began to plan for the future, sending Caulaincourt to escort Marie Louise to him, in case she still wished to come, but bidding him use neither persuasions nor coercion, saying: "I know women well, and especially my wife. Instead of the court of France, such as I had made it, to offer her a prison is a very great trial. If she were to bring a sad face or to appear bored, I would be inconsolable. I prefer solitude to the sight of melancholy. If her inclinations lead her to me, I will receive her with open arms; if not, let her remain in



Parma, or Florence, wherever she reigns, in short. I will claim nothing from her except my son."

This speech reveals not only his low estimate of woman's character, but the unbending pride which could not brook the thought of asking his wife to share a less brilliant lot with him than that which he had offered her at first. But while the sight of her and her son would undoubtedly have enhanced the pangs he suffered, it would, nevertheless, have been a salve to his pride to demonstrate to Europe and posterity, that the wife who had been forced to marry him, had learned to love him too well to forsake him now that his future was dimmed. This satisfaction, which was to fall to the lot of his brother Jerome, was, however, denied to him, and whereas his brother's wife has earned the admiration of posterity by her constancy, Marie Louise has only earned the world's pitying contempt.

Unfortunately, Caulaincourt did not reach Marie Louise until she was surrounded by Russians, who would probably have prevented her departure had she attempted to join her husband. Napoleon, therefore, proceeded to prepare for his journey, bidding farewell to the friends who came to see him, and gladly receiving from Isabey a recent portrait of his wife and son, which he was to take with him into exile. He also wrote sundry letters to his wife, expressing his sympathy with her sufferings, and saying in his last epistle from Fontainebleau: "You can always count on the courage, the calmness, and the friendship of your husband Napoleon. A kiss to the little King."

Napoleon required all the courage and calmness possible, not only to face the affecting farewells at Fontainebleau, but also to endure the awful scenes he encountered on his way to the coast. But before setting out from

Fréjus, he wrote to Dr. Corvisard, thanking him once more for his devoted care of his wife and child, and saying: "Give me news of Marie Louise, and never doubt my affection for you." The next day he embarked on an English frigate, which conveyed him and his followers to the Island of Elba, where he landed on the 4th of May, 1814, amid the cheers of the happy people.

In the meantime, Marie Louise had left Orleans on the 11th, and gone on to Rambouillet, where she received her father's ardently expected visit on the 16th of April. He came, accompanied by Metternich only, and as soon as he alighted Marie Louise fairly thrust the little King into his arms, tearfully imploring his protection for them both. Then, controlling her emotion with difficulty, she led him to her private apartment, where they had a long conversation together. But although the Emperor of Austria spent the night at Rambouillet, and they thus had plenty of time to discuss plans, he was careful not to tell her that she was to be parted from her husband for ever, but merely advised her to visit Vienna before going to the baths Corvisard prescribed to restore her impaired health. Francis also wrote a friendly letter to Napoleon, announcing this decision, although in all the discussions with the Allies he showed himself most hostile to his son-in-law, who owed all the provisions for his own and his family's comfort and safety to the generosity of his former friend, Alexander, Czar of Russia.

Indeed, had not Alexander been influenced by Talleyrand and Madame Krüdener — a friend of Madame de Staël and hence Napoleon's bitter enemy — it is likely he would have favoured Marie Louise's Regency, for he was a very chivalrous monarch. He visited her at Rambouillet, where he also paid his respects to the "little King," and the King of Prussia immediately followed this



example, being equally charmed by Napoleon's son. Poor little fellow, although only three, his precocious mind already took note of some of the changes around him, for he once gravely remarked: "Oh, I see very well I am no longer King, for I have no more pages!"

On the 23rd of April, three days after Napoleon's departure for Elba, Marie Louise left Rambouillet and set out for Austria. Although no longer Empress of France, she still travelled in state, no less than twenty-four carriages being required to convey her attendants and baggage. This journey home, however, contrasted sorely with her arrival; for she now passed through a country devastated by war, and ruin and poverty met her eye instead of prosperity and rejoicing. During this voyage she openly preferred French language and attendants, and while she herself seldom mentioned the Emperor, — for Metternich had cleverly insinuated that she had never been loved, — the others spoke of him very freely. Indeed, Madame de Montesquiou diligently strove to keep his memory green with both mother and child by frequent references to him, and carefully taught the boy to pray for his father night and morning.

The French frontier once crossed, Marie Louise's journey lost much of its lugubrious aspect; and, as she drew near Vienna, it assumed a festive appearance, until it seemed, as one of the spectators said, as if "Austria, forced to lend temporarily an adored princess, was celebrating her return as a victory." In Tyrol, the horses were even unharnessed, so that the people themselves could drag the carriage; and when Marie Louise re-entered Schönbrunn, she was escorted by her stepmother, who had kindly come to meet her, and surrounded by all her family, who warmly congratulated her upon her return into their midst.

Marie Louise, with all a cat's sensuous love of material comfort and wonted surroundings, soon resumed the quiet life of her girlhood days, until it almost seemed as if she had never left Austria. Drawing, painting, and music again beguiled many hours, and she diligently studied the Italian language, so as to be able to address her new subjects fluently when she reached Parma. But her life was extremely quiet and retired, although many people were curious to behold her, and went to Schönbrunn on purpose to see the King of Rome, whose graceful salutations charmed everybody, and who was unanimously pronounced "the handsomest child in the world!"

But, however calm and contented in outward appearance, Marie Louise was impatiently awaiting her father's return, and as soon as she heard he was coming, she sallied forth to meet him. He embraced her affectionately; but when she anxiously inquired what he would do for her, coldly answered, "that, as his daughter, all that he had was hers, but as a sovereign, he did not know her." This was sad news for Marie Louise, who now began to fear lest she might lose Parma as well as France, a prospect which dismayed her greatly, for she was pleasure-loving and egotistical in the extreme, and had been looking forward pleasurably to her life in Parma, where she would be first, and no longer the mere satellite of some great planet as she had been at the Tuileries.

The Emperor of Austria, after spending the night with her at Schönbrunn, made his triumphal entrance into Vienna on the following day, to attend a solemn Te Deum, and receive his people's congratulations on his victorious return. Of course, Marie Louise took no part in this solemnity, but remained quietly at Schönbrunn, where her father soon joined her again with the



rest of the family, and where all set diligently to work to wean her affections from Napoleon, and obliterate all trace and recollection of the four years she had spent in France.

This was a very congenial task for the Empress of Austria; but, strange to relate, Napoleon found his warmest advocate in Marie Louise's grandmother, the ex-Queen of Naples, whom he had despoiled of a throne. A generous adversary, she owned her hatred for Napoleon, but openly declared that, "when one is married it is for life," and urged that since her relatives would not allow Marie Louise to leave Vienna openly, she ought to tie her sheets together, escape by her window, and join her husband at any cost. She, alone, among the Austrians encouraged Marie Louise to wear Napoleon's picture, to speak of him, write to him, and, above all, remain faithful to him now that he was unfortunate, were it only for duty's sake. But heroics were not in Marie Louise's line; she found it far easier to yield to the general pressure; and when her grandmother upbraided her, and indignantly inquired: "What will the world say of you? It will judge you harshly!" she merely wept.

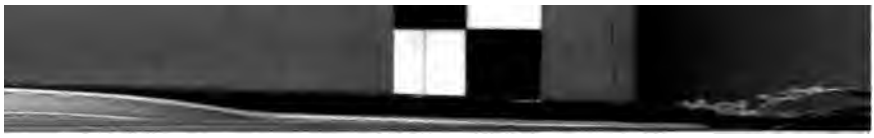
When driven to bay by this energetic grandmother, Marie Louise began to temporise, saying she would wait until she reached Parma, where she would be her own mistress, and could therefore act as she pleased. Still she was glad to escape from her admonitions by going to Savoy, where she insisted upon taking the baths that Dr. Corvisard had recommended before she left France. This journey, however, was opposed by the Austrians and by Napoleon, for they both feared the ex-Empress might be insulted in France; but Marie Louise's characteristic gentle obstinacy won the day, and she finally

departed for Aix, although forced to leave her son in Vienna under Madame de Montesquiou's care. As Metternich feared that Napoleon's friends might yet win Marie Louise's ear, and undo the work begun, he selected General Neipperg — whom Marie Louise had already seen at Dresden and Prague — to continue the alienating process which he and Talleyrand had planned.

Count Neipperg, an Austrian by birth, was a very clever diplomat who hated Napoleon bitterly, and who had helped to effect his overthrow by inducing Bernadotte, King of Sweden, and Murat, King of Naples, to join the coalition against him. Similar wiles had, however, failed a little later with Eugene de Beauharnais, who, when sounded by this smooth tempter, frankly cried: "I don't understand politics; but if it is true that the Emperor has abdicated, let us not lose a minute, but join our troops and go and uphold the authority of the Empress Regent and of her son!"

This was the man whom Metternich selected to mount guard over Marie Louise, instructing him to estrange her from her husband at any price, and authorising him to use *all and any means necessary to accomplish that purpose.* When Neipperg asked what these directions implied, Metternich brutally bade him "please that woman and become her paramour," an order which this forty-year-old man gladly undertook to carry out.

The Austrian general, therefore, joined Marie Louise with a small force of soldiers when she drew near Aix, for the ostensible purpose of protecting her from possible insult, and acted as her chamberlain during the brief absence of some of her French attendants. A slender, handsome, curly-haired blond, of courtly address and consummate cleverness, he nevertheless produced a disagreeable impression upon Marie Louise at first, because he had lost



one eye in battle, and wore a startling black patch to conceal its absence. But Marie Louise soon grew accustomed to this peculiarity, and, yielding gradually to his seductive arguments, became in time fully convinced that she would best further her husband's and son's interests if she obeyed her father implicitly until her own affairs were settled and she was safely installed in Parma. Neipperg proceeded so cautiously, that even Marie Louise's French attendants did not at first perceive his aim, and the Empress herself still wrote, on the anniversary of the Emperor's birthday: "How can I be happy on the 15th, when I am obliged to spend this day, so solemn for me, far from the two persons I love most dearly."

She so little suspected that she was a prisoner, and Neipperg her keeper, that she gradually allowed him to persuade her that she would best serve Napoleon's interests by promising to hold no communication at all with him, and to deliver his letters, unopened, into her father's hands. This lack of news — her last letter was dated July 31, 1813 — greatly disquieted the Emperor, who tried to communicate with her by every means in his power. But every attempt failed, and even the man he sent to escort her to Elba was refused admittance to her presence by the omnipresent and ever watchful Neipperg. Realising that it was probably by order of the Emperor of Austria that letters were intercepted, Napoleon nevertheless trusted Marie Louise's honour so implicitly that he never even suspected that his wife would promise not to communicate with him. He also still expected her to join him as soon as she had finished her cure at Aix in Savoy, and had her apartments at Elba freshly decorated, suggesting to the painter as sentimental device for the ceiling, "two pigeons tied by the same

string, the knots drawing tighter as they fly farther apart." Indeed, Napoleon felt so sure that Marie Louise was coming, that he carefully hoarded his sole remaining fireworks to give her a grand welcome, and was so desirous not to afford her even the slightest cause for jealousy, that when Madame Walewska came to Elba with her son, offering to share his exile, he kept her visit as secret as possible, and sent her away again as soon as he could.

Napoleon, who had so sorely tried Josephine, is said never to have been unfaithful to Marie Louise, which, if true, gave her no excuse for deserting him as she did. This visit of a young woman and child, however, caused considerable comment, and many of the soldiers who had followed him to Elba, firmly believed that the Empress had visited the island incognita, to give their Emperor a glimpse of his beloved son and confer with him concerning their future.

Meantime, Marie Louise was yielding more and more to the subtle influence of Neipperg, who played admirably on the piano, sang duets with her, escorted her on all her excursions, afoot or on horseback, and proved, in short, an accomplished and devoted cavalier. But whereas he apparently deferred to her every whim, he artfully got her so completely under his control that he unconsciously undermined all her beliefs, made her view the past in a false light, persuaded her that she had been a victim or a martyr, that Napoleon had never loved her, and that hence she owed him no duty at all. This work of complete alienation, so well begun during the six weeks' stay at Aix, was pursued with the utmost diligence and skill during a journey in Switzerland, where, as Marie Louise was travelling incognita, and her French attendants, De Bausset and Méneval, always had large



correspondences to attend to, the Austrian chamberlain was often her sole male escort.

He was not slow to take advantage of this opportunity, and made such good use of his time, that he not only entirely effaced Napoleon's image from Marie Louise's fickle heart, but cleverly proceeded to imprint his own upon it instead. All this was done so unobtrusively, and with such consummate skill, that none of her French attendants had any inkling of the danger until too late. But Neipperg was no novice at such work, for he had already persuaded one man's wife to run away with him several years before, and although he had married this woman after her divorce, and she had given him several sons, he had wearied of her in time, forsaken her, and now they were entirely estranged.

Neipperg took Marie Louise to see Hapsburg Castle, — the cradle of her race, — and finding an old lance-head, playfully presented it to her as a relic of her renowned ancestor the great Rudolf. Marie Louise, attaching a peculiar sentimental value to this token, had fragments of it set into rings, which were worn as souvenirs by all who had taken part in this excursion. Thus, travelling slowly through this beautiful country, with all her tastes for comfort gratified and her egotism flattered by being always given a prominent place, Marie Louise returned to Schönbrunn early in October, so entirely under Neipperg's sway, that she would no longer have ventured to do the least thing without his knowledge and consent.

Meantime, the Congress had assembled at Vienna, and when Marie Louise arrived there, social gaiety had already attained such a swing that an old beau wittily said: "The Congress dances, instead of progressing, (Le Congrès danse, il ne marche pas)." But whereas

Vienna had never been so lively before, Marie Louise had no share in the festivities, and the contrast between her present seclusion and isolation, and the adulation received during the past four years, when she had been the chief actress in every festive scene, proved very hard to bear. She was now allowed only surreptitious peeps at all these gay doings, a fact which proved a great grievance, for although loath to exert herself to please others, Marie Louise was extremely frivolous, and delighted in compliments, attentions, and pretty clothes. Besides she would have been glad to have had an opportunity to appear in the dainty gowns which she continued to order from Paris in large quantities, in spite of her reduced fortunes, and thus dazzle Count Neipperg, who now monopolised all her thoughts.

Napoleon, driven almost frantic by lack of news of wife and child, finally wrote, on the 10th of October, to implore the Duke of Tuscany, Marie Louise's uncle, to forward his letters to her and give him tidings of his family. He enclosed a missive which was duly delivered to Marie Louise, but it reached her with her father's injunctions not to return any answer, and as she did not even try to disobey this command, Napoleon waited in vain for a reply. Convinced now that the Allies prevented her writing, or confiscated her letters, he ceased to write, in utter despair.

The Allies were, meanwhile, bitterly regretting the concessions made to Napoleon and his family, and already busily occupied in trying to retract them. But whereas the timid Francis deprived his grandson of his title, as well as of a crown, he refused to yield to the Allies' suggestion that the boy should be educated to take religious orders. Still, he supported his daughter's cause with so little energy, that Neipperg, fearing lest her claims might

be set aside, became her champion in the Congress. By diplomacy, and as a reward for the undeniable services he had rendered the Allies, Neipperg finally obtained that Marie Louise should reign over Parma as long as she lived, securing for himself the office of her prime minister and chief adviser. But for many months the matter remained undecided, and during that time he worked so skilfully upon Marie Louise's fears, and made it so apparent that he was her sole advocate and friend, that she learned to depend upon him more and more, and did nothing save by his advice.

None of Napoleon's many friends or spies dared give him even a hint concerning this dependence, regarding which Talleyrand wrote to Paris, saying: "The Empress, handed over to * * * is not even careful to conceal her strange infatuation for this man, who is master of her mind and body." But they felt no such delicate scruples concerning other matters, and not only warned Napoleon that plans were now afoot to deprive him of Elba, and banish him to St. Helena or elsewhere, but also bade him guard against secret attempts at assassination, for he was sorely in the Allies' way, and they might yet try to get rid of him.

These tidings, added to his anxiety concerning his wife and child, the non-receipt of the funds promised him, and the general discontent in France, all conspired to determine Napoleon to make another bold attempt to retrieve his fortunes. Taking advantage, therefore, of the temporary absence of the English commissioner who generally mounted guard over him, Napoleon embarked on February 26th, with his small band of followers, and, cleverly dodging the frigates supposed to guard him, landed in France on the 1st of March, 1815, declaring: "The Congress is dissolved!"



Marie Louise

Every one knows the story of that marvellous march to Paris, and the fact that all the troops sent out to check him received him with transports of joy, and joining his forces, escorted him in triumph to Paris. He arrived there on March 20, 1815, on his son's fourth birthday, without having fired a single shot, or met the slightest resistance. But during the twenty days which elapsed between his landing in France, and his arrival at Paris, he wrote twice to Marie Louise, from Grenoble and Lyons, begging her to join him with her son just as soon as she could.

The disputes in Vienna had, meantime, been growing more acrimonious, each representative wishing to gain everything for his own country to the detriment of the rest, while the foreign guests were absorbed by a continual round of fashionable entertainments. But while even Marie Louise found a champion in Neipperg, no one spoke a good word for Napoleon, who seemed forgotten, save by a few loyal attendants and by his little son, who, although physically unlike him, inherited many traits of character from him. A precocious child, he not only knew how to read fluently even at that early age, but already had some knowledge of history and geography. His governess, however, wisely tried to keep him ignorant concerning the changes in his fortunes, but in some strange way he gleaned an inkling of what had happened, and suspiciously inquired, when the Prince de Ligne came to see him: "Is he a marshal? Is he one of those who deserted my father?" Reassured on this point, he received the Prince gladly, and they two, the oldest and youngest persons of importance at Vienna at that time, became great playfellows, spending many happy hours together drilling toy soldiers, until the old Prince died, and thus afforded Congress the novel entertainment of a state funeral.



It was shortly after this, that the news of Napoleon's escape reached Vienna, where it created a great sensation, and tightened the fast-loosening bond between the Allies, who forgot all dissensions and unanimously agreed to join forces once more to crush their foe definitely. The tidings of Napoleon's escape were especially unwelcome at Schönbrunn, where they reached Marie Louise when she returned from a ride with the inevitable Neipperg. Selfishly dreading to lose Parma, and be obliged to return to the husband whom she no longer loved, and was conscious of having betrayed, Marie Louise now wrote a letter to Congress, denying any knowledge of, or complicity in, Napoleon's plans, and placing herself and her son wholly under the Allies' protection. This missive, instigated and dictated by Neipperg, not only won for him fresh encomiums from the Congress, but is said to have determined the Allies to pursue Napoleon with more rancour than they would else have shown.

Still, after Neipperg had left her, Marie Louise, ever anxious to keep on the winning side, began to wonder whether she had not been too precipitate; for, in case her husband succeeded, he might resent what she had done. But while she deemed it might have been wise to leave a door open whereby to escape, she really felt no sympathy with Napoleon, for she acquiesced by her silence, when her uncle bluntly remarked: "My poor Louise, what I wish for you and for us all, is that your husband may break his neck!"

When Napoleon's letters reached her, she handed them over to her father without a pang, and he laid them, still unopened, before the Congress. It formally declared war on Napoleon, on the 13th of March, 1815, each ally pledging himself to do all in his power to suppress Napoleon for good and all, before that memor-

able assembly dissolved. Just then, the vague rumour of an imperial plot to kidnap the little King of Rome caused his sudden removal from Schönbrunn to Vienna, where he was placed under the personal care of the Emperor of Austria. Apartments adjoining those of Francis were allotted to the child, who thenceforth spent many hours of every day in his grandfather's study, where he became a great pet.

It was well that the King of Rome's grandfather loved him dearly, for he was now separated from his beloved governess, "Maman Quiou." She had cared for him faithfully ever since his birth, and was dismissed merely because she taught him to honour and pray for his father, and would fain have seen them together once more. Fearing lest some base attempt might be made upon the life of her precious charge, and treacherously ascribed to her, Madame de Montesquiou absolutely refused to surrender the King of Rome until she received a written order from the Emperor of Austria, and a medical certificate testifying that the boy left her hands in perfect mental and physical condition. This separation, which almost broke poor "Maman Quiou's" heart, was also intensely painful to the sensitive little King, who became silent and melancholy, looked askance at his German attendants, and clung pathetically to Madame Marchand, the last of his French friends. Just then Marie Louise was very unhappy, too, not at the separation from her son, whose loyalty to his father was a constant reproach to her, but because Neipperg was about to leave her to take part in the coming war. Still, before he left, he supplied her with written instructions for behaviour in every possible emergency, and during his six months' absence kept up a lively and voluminous correspondence with her, for he well knew the importance



of maintaining his unbounded influence over that plastic nature.

Meantime, Napoleon impatiently expected his wife and son, whom the people were eager to welcome once more, as was shown by these toasts, given at a popular banquet, on the 26th of March: "To her Majesty the Empress. May she, on her return to our midst, find in the liveliness of our transports an expression of the love which the French bear her, and of the regrets caused by her absence." "To the Prince Imperial. May that august child, the source of such great hopes, grow up sheltered by his father's genius and inherit his great qualities for the happiness and glory of France."

Still it is said that Napoleon, suspecting that Marie Louise was not a free agent, did not feel as confident of her immediate return as he declared, and that he soon sent secret emissaries to contrive her escape in disguise, were she only willing to leave Vienna. Méneval, who was still with her, and who still contrived to communicate from time to time with the Emperor's secretary, now thought it best to hint how matters stood, and wrote: "I do not know when the Empress will go to France. The Cabinet is far from inclined to allow her to do so just now. The mind of the Empress is so troubled, that she dwells with terror on the thought of returning to France. All possible means have been employed during the past six months to estrange her from the Emperor. When, by chance, I have been able to speak a word in private to her, I have besought her to keep neutral, and not to sign any papers. But they have induced her to take sundry steps to declare that she has no part in the Emperor's plans, and to place herself under the protection of her father and of the Allies." In another letter he tries to excuse her, by

saying that she feels that "as she did not share his [Napoleon's] disgrace, she cannot share a prosperity to which she has not contributed," and that she "is really good, only dominated just now by foreign influences."

Foreign influences were soon to be the only ones left around her, for early in April her French lady-in-waiting died, imploring her, with her last breath, to return to her husband. But it was now too late. Marie Louise had burned her bridges behind her by her letter to Congress, and her last scruples seem to have vanished when she learned that the Countess of Neipperg was dead, and the General thus free to contract new ties.

On the 1st of April, Napoleon formally wrote to the Emperor of Austria, claiming "the objects of his dearest affections, his wife and child;" but this appeal proved unavailing, and when some one asked the Czar to interfere, he declared it would be impossible for him to do so, as "the Archduchess Marie Louise had informed him that she would not return to France at any price." In fact, Marie Louise's sympathies were now so thoroughly and exclusively enlisted on the Austrian side, that she longed to take part in the public processions which were praying for success in this war, and was only with difficulty deterred from doing so. But this fact was not known in Paris, where the people expected her to be present at the ceremony of the Champ de Mai, and where the soldiers tried to comfort their idolised chief for the absence of his wife and son, by boldly crying: "We will go to Vienna and get them."

Méneval, having given up all hope of influencing Marie Louise, now prepared to leave her, and he reports that in their last interview the Empress said: "I feel that all connection between me and France is about to

be severed, but I will never forget that adopted country. Assure the Emperor that I wish him well. I hope he will understand how unfortunately I am placed. I will never consent to a divorce, but I flatter myself that he will consent to an amicable separation, and that he will bear me no resentment. This separation has become indispensable. It will not alter my feelings of esteem and gratitude." Having thus spoken, Marie Louise presented her faithful attendant with a jewelled snuff-box, and withdrew to conceal the emotion she undoubtedly felt during this parting scene.

Méneval's farewell visit to the little King was far more satisfactory, however; for although the child seemed melancholy and constrained, and hardly answered his questions at first, he drew Méneval into a window niche before his departure, and, making sure they would not be overheard, eagerly whispered: "Mr. Méva, tell *him* I still love him dearly!"

On reaching Paris, Méneval found Napoleon, not in the Tuileries, — where the empty rooms affected him too painfully, — but in the Elysée, where he wandered sadly up and down, and was once found in tears before his child's portrait. The Emperor closely questioned Méneval concerning his wife and son, and in this first interview his worst fears were evidently confirmed, for although he never spoke a harsh word against Marie Louise, he seemed deeply hurt by her desertion, and so depressed that he winced when the people sang, in their queer dialect: —

"Ah! dis donc, Napoléon,
A n'vient pas ta Marie Louise?"
"(Say, Napoleon, is n't your Marie Louise coming?)"

On entering the Tuileries, on March 20, 1815, amid the delirious joy of his followers, he felt sure his

wife and child would soon be with him, and was therefore confident and full of hope in the future; but now that they failed him, this joyous confidence vanished never to return, except for a moment at the battle of Waterloo, when he declared that, although he had but 120,000 men to oppose to the enemies' 230,000, there were still ninety chances in favour of his winning the day! But Fortune had deserted Napoleon for good and all, and in spite of his genius, he was beaten by the Allies at Waterloo, and returned to the Elysée only to abdicate a second time in favour of his son, saying: —

My political life is over, and I proclaim my son, Emperor of the French, under the name of Napoleon II. The ministers will form the governing council for the present. The interest I bear my son makes me urge the Chambers to promulgate a law organising the Regency without delay. Unite all of you for the safety of the public, and so as to remain an independent nation.

(Signed) NAPOLEON.

22nd June, 1815.

This abdication was, however, to be as futile as the first, for Napoleon II. figures in history merely as a matter of courtesy.

Meantime, the victory of Waterloo had been celebrated with grand rejoicings in Austria, where the Viennese felt so sure of Marie Louise's sympathy that they gave her a grand serenade in honour of her husband's downfall.

Banished to St. Helena, — where he spent six years of martyrdom, no less cruel because part of his sufferings were imaginary or self-inflicted, — Napoleon enjoyed the sympathy of many even among his foes. Devoted friends accompanied him into exile; his mother and sisters vainly petitioned to share his imprisonment;

his brothers wished to join him in turn; strangers sent him gifts: but his wife alone made no sign, expressed no compassion, shed no tear. This callous indifference, this lack of womanly sympathy, this unprincipled desertion of a husband who — whatever his faults — had always been kind to her, compels history to point a finger of eternal scorn at Marie Louise, whose shortcomings would else have been judged more leniently.

The Congress of Vienna and the second Treaty of Paris ultimately assured to Marie Louise the coveted duchies of Parma, Plaisance, and Guastella for life, but only on condition that she left her son in Vienna under his grandfather's immediate care. Marie Louise made no remonstrance against this decree, gave up her child as readily as her husband, and set forth with Neipperg to take possession of her new estates in April, 1816. Her son, being deprived of his title and inheritance, was, however, duly promised the Duchy of Reichstadt in Austria, at his mother's death.

In the beautiful poem entitled "Napoleon II.," Victor Hugo declares that when the Allies came to divide the spoils, "England took the Eagle and Austria the Eaglet," designating Napoleon and his son by these poetic terms. M. Edmond Rostand, the gifted author of "Cyrano de Bergerac," appropriated this poetic simile for his drama "L'Aiglon" (The Eaglet), wherein he depicts, in moving scenes, the aspirations of Napoleon's talented son, and his early and pathetic death. To construct this wonderful play, he cleverly used all a poet's license, touching up high lights, darkening shadows, magnifying trifling occurrences to secure dramatic climaxes, and deviating from history wherever it would best serve his consummate art. This play, written, it is said, for Sarah Bernhardt, has awakened new interest in the life of

Marie Louise

Napoleon's son, who has been known in turn as King of Rome, Little Bonaparte, Prince Imperial, Napoleon II., Francis, Duke of Reichstadt, and lastly as Napoleon, or the Eaglet of Rostand. The author of " L'Aiglon " takes equal liberties with Marie Louise, who was an essentially uninteresting woman in real life, as has already been seen, and as the conclusion of her history proves.

Although Marie Louise relinquished possession of her son without a murmur, she made a point of visiting him every year, coming to Vienna under the escort of the inevitable Neipperg, who corresponded regularly with young Napoleon, after the latter became old enough to write. This correspondence, which may soon be published, will doubtless clear up many obscure points in the history of this prince, who has been viewed as the innocent scapegoat for all his father's crimes, or, as the French express it, " une victime expiatoire." It is probable that at that time the young Prince viewed Neipperg — as he ostensibly was — merely in the light of his mother's devoted friend and general factotum, and was not yet aware of his treacherous machinations. Gentle and dutiful toward his mother, the boy never showed her the intense devotion he always felt for his exiled and unhappy father, or the filial affection which he displayed toward his grandfather, whose weakness of character robbed him of his birthright, although the old man loved him more than any of his other children or grandchildren.

In Parma, Marie Louise found peace and comfort, and Neipperg managed so cleverly that she never discovered that she was merely his tool and a virtual prisoner. Not only did he govern her estates for her, but he opened all her letters, received her guests, and never allowed any

one to approach her save through him. Even at night, Neipperg mounted close guard over her, for it is said her sleeping apartment could be reached only by passing through his own, and that of a maid whom he always appointed himself. Napoleon was never mentioned at the court of Parma, save in terms of contempt and as a base adventurer, for Neipperg carefully collected all that was written against him, and had these works read aloud to Marie Louise. She, instigated by Neipperg, professed the utmost devotion for the Bourbons, who now sat upon the throne she had occupied during four brief years, and nothing annoyed her more than occasional enthusiastic attempts on the part of the Italians to cheer for Napoleon, their old hero.

Napoleon kept Marie Louise's portrait beside his son's bust on his mantelpiece at St. Helena, and repeatedly declared: "Marie Louise is virtue personified. She is Innocence with all its attractions." Whatever he may have known or suspected concerning her delinquencies, no word of blame ever crossed his lips. His physician, venturing in 1817 to express regret that Marie Louise did not write to him, he defended her warmly, saying: "I believe that Marie Louise is so circumstanced, as far as I am concerned, that she might be — in that respect — not considered a free agent. I have always had cause to praise the conduct of my good Louise, and I think it is entirely out of her power to do anything to help me."

One evening, while dreaming aloud by the fireside, Napoleon suddenly remarked that if he were only free, he would travel throughout the world, adding: "Do you see me at Vienna, or at Parma, surprising the Empress at Mass or during a drive? What fun it would be!" But while he smiled at this thought and was happy, Marie



Louise feared nothing so much as his return, and the wild rumours of his escape which occasionally disquieted Europe, caused no greater perturbations anywhere than in her faithless heart.

In fact, Marie Louise had no desire whatever to do anything but forget him and the years spent in France; for she not only openly declared, "I was sacrificed," whenever any reference was made to her marriage, but coldly refused to allow a book about him to be dedicated to her, and even issued an edict forbidding its sale in her estates.

Napoleon, being obliged to part successively with his secretary Las Cases, his physician O'Meara, and his friend General Gourgaud, besought them, in turn, to visit his wife and son, giving them many affectionate messages to deliver, and imploring them to send him news. These friends faithfully tried to acquit themselves of these — to them — sacred commissions; but they never obtained an interview with Marie Louise, and she ignored even the most touching letters, or answered them only in a cold and perfunctory way.

In January, 1819, Napoleon rejoiced over the arrival of two priests and a doctor sent by his mother. They brought him a portrait of his son, which was sent by Eugene, but no token or message from his faithless wife. Although his friends tried to send him news of the boy, all their efforts were vain; and a German botanist, who had lately seen the child, only succeeded in smuggling a golden curl and a few traced lines into the fond father's keeping, but was never allowed to speak a word to the prisoner of Sir Hudson Lowe.

In 1820, when Napoleon was dying of cancer in a mere hut on a barren island, Marie Louise, in a comfortable palace in a lovely land, complacently wrote: "I



can only congratulate myself upon my lot. I am contented, happy, and quiet here. My health is excellent, and what I prize more highly still, my son thrives and is developing physically and mentally to his great advantage under the eye of my father, who loves him dearly, and in the hands of his excellent governor, who is as much attached to him as to his own child."

In fact, her son, the Duke of Reichstadt, was then a most interesting lad of nine, playing quietly in the study where his grandfather discussed matters of state. Some writers claim that he was brought up in utter ignorance of his illustrious origin, but this statement has been disproved. Well taught and far advanced for his years, his father's history and fate were no secrets to him; for his grandfather had directed his teachers to answer all his questions truthfully, so as to enable him to learn early how to guard against Napoleon's errors. But all he learned only served to increase his secret adoration for the father whom he had not seen since he was three years old, but to whom he ever remained absolutely loyal. The beautiful cradle brought as a trophy from Paris, also served to recall the familiar story told of his birth, which must also have recurred to his mother's memory when she congratulated the Bourbons on the advent of their "Child of Miracle." Nevertheless even then, Napoleon still had numerous admirers and partisans in France, who now began to call his child: "The Son of the Man," and did not despair of seeing him some day occupy his glorious father's throne.

In January, 1821, Napoleon felt his end draw near, and made a will disposing of all his property, and leaving messages and instructions for his wife and son. He even willed his heart to Marie Louise, bidding his physician preserve it in alcohol and carry it to Parma, saying:

"You must tell her that I loved her dearly, and never ceased to love her. You must also relate to her all that you have seen, everything pertaining to my situation." Then, attending to his religious duties, Napoleon sank into an unconscious state, and breathed his last on the 5th of May, 1821.

The heart which Napoleon had thus left to his faithless wife could not be taken to her, however; Sir Hudson Lowe peremptorily refusing to allow any part of the hero to be borne away from the island. But this governor, unfeeling as he was, wrote to Lady Holland to announce the death of the man whose captivity she had tried to lighten by thoughtful gifts. He did not, however, break the news to Marie Louise, who learned it through the newspapers on the 17th of July, 1821. Neipperg immediately wrote to Metternich announcing that as soon as the news was officially confirmed the court of Parma would wear mourning and hold private religious services. He reported also that "Her Majesty, although deeply affected by the news which had reached her, continues, nevertheless, to enjoy very good health." Indeed, Marie Louise's health was so good, that three days later, on receipt of the official notification of Napoleon's death, she donned a new and becoming mourning robe, and was present at the funeral service, held in her private chapel "for thy servant, the husband of our archduchess," who was, however, never once mentioned by name.

Marie Louise also ordered a thousand masses to be said at Parma and at Vienna for the rest of Napoleon's soul; but the sorrow Neipperg mentioned, and her indifference to the living Napoleon, did not prevent her writing immediately to England to ask that any legacy the dead Napoleon had left her or her son might not

be withheld from them. Less than three months later, although still dressed in black, she attended the theatre frequently, to the surprise of the Italians, who mourned for Napoleon far more truly than she.

Dr. Antomarchi, arriving at Parma just then, bearing a letter from General Bertrand, — one of Napoleon's devoted friends at St. Helena, — was received with the utmost courtesy by Neipperg, who announced that Marie Louise was not able to see him, but that she "took pleasure in rendering to the dead Napoleon the cult she had devoted to him during his life." Then Neipperg dismissed the physician courteously, giving him a diamond ring in Marie Louise's name. But that very evening, Dr. Antomarchi saw her in a private box at the theatre, and was deeply touched by the pallor and delicate appearance which he mistakenly ascribed to sorrow for Napoleon's death.

The truth is, however, that Marie Louise, although she had openly declared she would never claim a divorce, had nevertheless long been faithless to her marriage vows. By means of some pious jugglery, and with the knowledge and consent of her father, she had entered into a secret connection with General Neipperg. *When* this morganatic marriage was celebrated, is still a mystery; but the fact remains that Marie Louise already had one living daughter by Neipperg, and that a few weeks after Napoleon's death she gave birth to a son, known as Count of Montenuovo. Her pallor, when Dr. Antomarchi saw her in the theatre, was owing to a recent confinement, and not at all to grief; for Marie Louise never felt or expressed any sympathy whatever for the captive Napoleon, nor showed the slightest remorse for her heartless desertion of him.

Neipperg never openly claimed his position as her

husband, and the connection, thanks to his diplomacy, was never openly referred to at Parma, although three living children are ascribed to him and to Marie Louise, two of whom lived to marry and have issue. This fact gave rise to the — perchance — malicious report that Marie Louise's intimacy with Neipperg had already begun when Napoleon escaped from Elba, and that intimacy is alleged as the reason why she refused to join her husband in Paris, and stirred the Allies up against him. But if Marie Louise was too indifferent to listen to Dr. Antomarchi's narrative, Napoleon's other relatives were not, and the story he told to Madame Lætitia wrung from her many tears, as she sat spinning in her Roman home, all other occupations being impossible to her now that she was nearly blind.

The person who mourned Napoleon most sincerely, however, was the son who had parted from him in babyhood, and who received the tidings at Schönbrunn on the 22nd of July, 1821. Although only ten years old, the boy melted into tears, and his grief had an intensity and duration seldom seen in a child. The Austrian Emperor, who wisely concealed nothing from him, now allowed him and his attendants to wear mourning, an outward mark of respect which he could not avoid.

The Duke of Reichstadt's devotion to his father's memory increased instead of diminishing as time went on, for the imaginative lad pondered deeply on all he saw and heard, and he lived only in hopes of carrying out the glorious plans his father had made. Debarred from all intercourse with the Bonapartes, or with his father's friends, he never received any of the tokens left him, but eagerly perused the memoirs written by Napoleon's attendants, and thus learned how his father had lived and died in St. Helena, and received his last messages and in-



structions. A reserved, silent lad, the Duke of Reichstadt seldom spoke of his own feelings; but although filial in his behaviour to Marie Louise when she visited him yearly at Vienna, he never showed her a tithe of the passionate devotion he felt for his dead father. Her connection with Neipperg never being openly mentioned, he may not have known it until after his father's death; but he never mentioned it at any time, as far as we now know, although he must have been aware of the existence of a half brother and sisters.

Marie Louise pursued her calm, self-satisfied existence at Parma, and when Lamartine visited her there in 1827, he reported: "She speaks of the past as of an historical epoch which has no connection with her or with the present. The Empress and Marie Louise are two totally separate creatures; she is far from regretting anything, for she is happy in her new relations."

These so-called "new relations" were the real source of her comfort, for Neipperg made a capable sovereign for her estates, where he nevertheless carefully assumed a subordinate position, making Marie Louise's pleasure his first care. But his close watch over her never relaxed, and whether he really loved her or not, the position he occupied must have fulfilled all his ambitions, for he had the satisfaction of dealing the most bitter blow to his hated foe, Napoleon.

Fate decreed that Neipperg's triumph should be short, for in 1829 he fell ill, and died without being able to leave Marie Louise any definite instructions for the future. She went into mourning, and wept profusely for "the dear General," for whom she erected a magnificent monument; but although many people fancied she would prove so inconsolable that she would gladly resign Parma to her successor and retire to Vienna, she

soon dried her tears, and as her admirably organised state gave her little trouble, held fast to it. Before long, she again gave dinner parties just as before, and she attended the theatre as regularly as usual six weeks after Neipperg was laid to rest. Besides, she strove to banish any sad ideas by a new journey in Switzerland, where former associations were evidently neither vivid nor painful enough to mar her pleasure in any way.

Meantime her son was growing up, and his education being nearly finished, his grandfather deemed it time to introduce him into society. The young man, who was a familiar figure in his grandfather's study and on the Prado, — where he rode fiery horses with consummate grace and skill, — had otherwise lived in great retirement all these years. He made his social début at a grand ball given by the English ambassador, Lord Cowley, where he was the observed of all observers, attracting considerable attention by his birth, by his tall stature, fair hair, regular features, and the deep blue eyes whose fiery glance recalled his father. But however unlike Napoleon in outward appearance, the young man possessed the same powerful imagination, the same restless ambition, the same enthusiasm, and the same love for everything pertaining to war. Indeed, had not too rapid growth engendered delicate health, the young Duke would already have joined the regiment to which he belonged, for he was determined to become a soldier worthy of his sire.

It was at his first ball that the Duke of Reichstadt not only won the golden opinion of the Viennese ladies, but attracted the attention of Marmont, his father's old friend and companion in arms. This encounter charmed the Duke, who, forgetting the defection which had dealt Napoleon such a severe blow, only remembered Mar-



mont's years of faithful service, and longed to hear him relate the story of his campaigns. This meeting was, therefore, only a prelude to many others; for the Emperor of Austria bade Marmont instruct his grandson in the history of his time, giving him graphic accounts of the engagements he had witnessed. These lessons lasted about three months, and were equally well enjoyed by master and pupil, the former bearing delighted witness to the latter's keenness of perception and strategic insight.

On first entering into society, the Duke of Reichstadt also met M. de Prokesch-Osten, an Austrian officer who had written an able work on Napoleon's last campaign. This book, eagerly studied by Napoleon's son, paved the way for a friendship, equally deep on both sides, and which was to endure until death. In the society of this man, to whom, although considerably older, he could confide all his hopes and aspirations, the young Duke poured out his soul, and found not only a sympathetic listener, but an ardent admirer, who has since borne testimony to the superiority of his mind.

Those conversations with Marmont and Prokesch-Osten, together with his studies, which comprised all that had then been written concerning Napoleon's career, worked the Duke up to a ferment of enthusiasm and ambition, which was in nowise allayed by the agitation of the times. That was an epoch of political turmoil, not only in Poland and France, but in Italy also; for, if the French were restive under Bourbon rule, the Italians were doubly so under Austrian government. In France, the Bourbons, having become impossible in 1830, the Bonapartist faction issued a proclamation calling Napoleon II. to the throne. Unfortunately for them, however, their candidate was young, and in the hands of the

Austrians, who, knowing the Italians positively adored the name of Napoleon, feared to lose their possessions in Italy should a Bonaparte again occupy the French throne. Had Francis II. been sure of forfeiting nothing, he would probably not have opposed this plan, for, seeing how affairs were tending, he deemed it advisable to warn his grandson that a sudden turn of Fortune's wheel might bring him back to the Tuileries, and even remarked, in 1831: "If the French asked for you, and the Allies consented, I should not oppose your mounting the throne of France." Knowing besides that the Bonapartists were numerous and popular, he once declared: "You will no sooner appear on the bridge of Strasbourg, than the reign of the Orleans will be over."

These assurances naturally made the fiery-souled youth dream dreams and see visions, which were never to be fulfilled. His Bonaparte relatives, who had never been allowed to communicate with him in any way, and whose letters had all been intercepted, now tried to open relations with him by means of a cousin, Countess Camerata, who came to Vienna in disguise. She contrived at last to send a note to the Duke of Reichstadt, who, discovering it was the third she had written, and that two others must already have fallen into the hands of spies, courteously refused to enter into personal communication with her. The Countess, it is said, once managed to kiss his hand, but aside from that had no intercourse with the Duke, who wished to return to France openly, at the request of the people, and refused to stoop to conspiracy. The political agitations in France resulted at last in the ejection of the Bourbons and the election of Louis Philippe, who, in spite of opposition, held his own until 1848.

To compensate his beloved grandson for the collapse

of all the hopes so rashly fostered, Francis II. allowed him to join his regiment, hoping that would prove a substitute. But too rapid growth had entailed great delicacy of constitution, and, in spite of a man's stature and an abnormal brain development, the Duke still possessed the stomach and lungs of a mere child. Excitement, exposure, and fatigue, therefore, soon produced extreme lassitude, which only irritated the young man, and made him impatiently exclaim: "I owe a grudge to this wretched body, which will not do what my soul wishes."

The court physician vainly advised rest and quiet, saying: "It is a great pity your Royal Highness has not the power to change bodies, as you change horses when you have tired them out; but I implore you, my lord, bear in mind that you have a soul of iron in a body of crystal, and that an abuse of will power can only be fatal to you."

Such sage advice was, however, entirely thrown away on so ambitious a patient, for the Duke persisted, concealing his weakness and suffering with heroic fortitude, and spurred on to efforts far beyond his strength by thoughtless companions, who fancied his lack of physical endurance due merely to effeminate treatment. But his hoarse voice, oppressed lungs, and increasing emaciation finally so alarmed his physicians, that they prevailed upon the Emperor to exert his authority and place the young man under arrest at Schönbrunn. For a soldier there is no appeal from such an order; but as the Duke left his grandfather's presence, he turned toward the physician, livid with rage, and cried: "It is you who place me under arrest."

This anger, so natural in an ambitious youth suddenly cut off from all he loves, soon subsided, however, for the Duke was fair-minded and generous, as well as ambi-

tious. But, whereas his health improved at first under strict regimen and by dint of great care, his eager spirit could not but wear out his frail body. Like all consumptives, he was full of hope as soon as the slightest amelioration of his condition became perceptible, and was so energetic, morally and mentally, that few even among his intimates ever suspected all he suffered from weakness and depression.

Cut off from the active pursuits he loved, and kept indoors by a cold, damp climate, the young Duke now devoted much time to the study of poetry and religion, which he eagerly discussed with his friends. Then, encouraged by a slight improvement in his condition, he again won his grandfather's consent to rejoin his regiment; but he was forced to give up after a few days, and withdraw once more to Schönbrunn, where he spent the next six months in a hopeless struggle with weakness and death. The fact that he was a virtual prisoner, and could not even seek the milder climate of Italy, which his physicians recommended, and that all his hopes were blasted, made him feel like an eaglet with a broken wing; and his friend Prokesch has since declared: "The Prince was killed by the grief which devoured him, and which was the result of his situation, and the inactivity to which his most noble faculties were condemned. It is impossible for me to relinquish the conviction that a happy and active youth would have contributed greatly to strengthen his body, and that the checked development of his organs was the result of his moral sufferings."

Pulmonary disease alone, is enough to carry off any young man, but some scurrilous persons have ventured to suggest that the Duke's untimely end was due to all manner of excesses, although they can allege no proof of their statements. They declare, among other things,



that the son of Napoleon had sundry love-affairs, including the popular dancer, Fanny Elssler, his cousin the Archduchess, and his mother's reader among his many sweethearts.

In the spring of 1832, the Duke of Reichstadt, after spending the winter in town with his grandfather, removed to Schönbrunn, where he sat on the balcony in the sunshine, sadly noting the signs of the last spring he would ever see on earth. A trifling increase of strength kindled a new gleam of hope, but once more his restless spirit drove him to overtax his feeble frame. After a morning ride in which he exerted himself considerably to control the fiery steed he rode so well, the Prince insisted upon taking an afternoon drive, in the course of which he was chilled by a cold wind, so he returned home only to fall a prey to inflammation of the lungs. This proved the last straw, every one now felt that his days were numbered, and Marie Louise was summoned to Vienna in great haste.

Just then his friend Prokesch was travelling in Italy, so the Archduchess Sophy, mother of the present Emperor of Austria, sat by his bedside, nursing him with all an elder sister's love and devotion. She had come to Vienna as a bride, when the Duke was only thirteen, and from the first they had been playmates and friends. Perceiving the end near, she now suggested that they should partake of the sacrament together in his room, saying: "We will join our prayers, I for your recovery, you for my safe deliverance." The Duke gladly consented, and lying there on his death-bed, received communion, while his cousin knelt beside him, little suspecting that the child, whom she then expected, would end his life in a tragic way in Mexico, for it proved to be the unhappy Maximilian.



THE DUKE OF REICHSTADT.

Unseen by the Duke of Reichstadt, his attendants all witnessed this touching ceremony, which they knew would soon be followed by a birth and a death. The angel of life was, however, the first to appear, and the Archduchess was, therefore, not present when her cousin breathed his last. Marie Louise, detained at Triest by illness, arrived at Schönbrunn only on the 24th of June, and almost fainted when she beheld the change in her son. From that moment she watched over him with the utmost devotion, and as if full of remorse for not having sooner shown him all a mother's tender love. The Duke, who had always been rather cold and reticent with her, now seemed pleased to have her near him, and his grandfather having finally granted him permission to travel, he spoke eagerly of visiting her in Italy the next winter. Meantime the heat grew very oppressive at Schönbrunn, and the appearance of a thunder-storm was hailed with joy; because all hoped it might cool the air and afford relief to the labouring lungs of the poor patient. The storm broke with great fury right over the lordly castle, and in the midst of its rush and roar the lightning knocked down one of the imperial eagles crowning the edifice. This accident was viewed in the light of an evil omen by the Duke's attendants, who now remembered that a violent storm had also heralded Napoleon's death, and that it was in this very room that the Duke had received the tidings of his father's demise just eleven years before.

Marie Louise, exhausted with watching, finally consented to retire for a few hours' needed rest, and as the Duke asked to remain alone, his attendants pretended to withdraw also. But from their posts they kept close watch over the patient, who at half-past three in the morning suddenly rose up in bed, crying aloud: "I



succumb! I succumb!" Rushing forward, the attendants tenderly supported the dying Duke, who gasped, "My mother! My mother!" and sank back exhausted, as Marie Louise came into the room and fell upon her knees beside her dying son, who, gazing affectionately upon her, passed away without further suffering.

The news of the Duke's death was immediately conveyed to the Emperor, who was then at Linz, for he could not bear to see his favourite die. Although he mourned his grandson sincerely, he knew life had little to offer so ardent a spirit, and thoughtfully said: "I consider the Duke's death happy as far as he is concerned. I do not know whether his death is fortunate or unfortunate for the public weal. As for me, I shall always regret the loss of my grandson."

Meanwhile, in a darkened room in Rome, Prokesch was telling Madame Lætitia how clever and manly this grandson was, and how utterly devoted to the memory of the father whom he so closely resembled in character, and promised to rival in genius. This old, nearly blind grandmother, wept for joy on hearing this enthusiastic description, and sent her grandson her portrait and a lock of his father's hair, together with her blessing. But although she said: "Let him respect his father's last wishes! His hour will come, and he will mount to his father's throne," that prediction was never to come true. Indeed, only a few hours after it was made, the Duke of Reichstadt was called away, for his brief pilgrimage on earth was already ended.

Marie Louise and the Emperor of Austria were not the only mourners for the Duke, who was regretted by all his father's adherents and by many of the Viennese, with whom he had always been a favourite. His funeral was very imposing, though simple, and his body finally

lowered into the vault of the Capuchin Church, to rest near that of his famous ancestress, the Empress Marie Thérèse, on the very spot where his father had stood after the battle of Wagram, little suspecting that the sole heir of all his glory would be interred there at twenty-one!

Only a short time before his demise, the ex-King of Rome pathetically remarked that his birth and death would comprise his whole history, and that his cradle and grave would be close together, for the famous silver-gilt crib was even then in the Imperial Treasury at Vienna, where it can still be seen.

Francis II. missed his grandson as long as he lived, and he was the first of the imperial family to follow him into the tomb. As for Marie Louise, she mourned as faithfully as her shallow nature would allow; and declared, with exaggerated sentiment: "I count each one of the days that pass; it is one interval less separating me from a being so beloved. I suffer; but then how can one think of complaining after witnessing such cruel suffering endured with such calmness and resignation." Nevertheless, she did not belong to the inconsolable kind. Of the clinging vine order of woman, she had to lean upon some one, and since Neipperg's death, she had gradually learned to depend more and more upon her new chamberlain, Charles de Bombelles, a French nobleman and another inveterate foe of Napoleon I. On the 17th of February, 1834, she married this man, with the knowledge and consent of her family, but this third marriage also was kept secret until her death, and acknowledged only in her will.

De Bombelles bitterly hated Napoleon, whose name and features were so obnoxious to him, that he is said to have destroyed the magnificent toilet-table which the



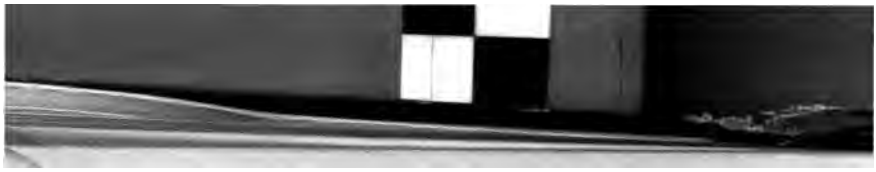
city of Paris gave Marie Louise, and which Neipperg had spared. It was valued at 250,386 francs, and he destroyed it merely because Napoleon's portrait appeared in one of the medallions. It is further stated that De Bombelles broke it up with his own hands, selling the precious metal of which it had been fashioned for 125,000 francs, and giving that money to the cholera fund.

About a year after her son's death, Marie Louise lost her father; but although she again expressed heart-rending sorrow, every one knew her emotions were not deep enough to disturb permanently the even current of her selfish life and therefore wasted little sympathy upon her. While the four years which she had spent in Paris seemed to have been completely effaced from her memory, others could not but remember all she had said and done when there, and wondered how she felt when Napoleon's remains were brought back to Paris, and solemnly entombed in the Invalides with every token of respect. Those who had shared the Emperor's exile were honoured guests on this occasion, and old General Moncey, tearfully viewing the scene, thankfully exclaimed: "Now I can die!" But Marie Louise had no share at all in the pageant, because she had chosen to discard all claim to her husband's glory.

Marie Louise continued to enjoy a monotonously comfortable existence in her duchy, varied by occasional journeys to Vienna, until she died at Parma on the 17th of December, 1847, from inflammation of the lungs. She had lived fifty-six years, and when she died the estate for which she had sacrificed husband, son, and reputation passed into the hands of the Duke of Lucca. Marie Louise was buried in the Capuchin Church at Vienna, where six coffins stand between hers and her



son's. Like moist clay in the hand of a potter, Marie Louise yielded unresistingly to every pressure; but whereas her naturally weak character, the force of adverse circumstances, and the strong influences brought to bear upon her are urged as excuses for her conduct, history will ever point out the fact that she was grievously wanting in sympathy, womanliness, and motherliness. Even her unlovely traits might, however, have been forgotten or excused, had she not proved faithless in times of trial to the man whom she had pretended to love as long as fortune smiled upon him, for the world will forgive almost anything except faithlessness in a woman.



EUGÉNIE

ON May 5, 1826, the fifth anniversary of Napoleon's death at St. Helena, an earthquake shook the city of Grenada so violently that the Countess de Téba, not daring to remain in her house, rushed out into her garden, where, it is said, she gave birth to her second child. This golden-haired, blue-eyed daughter, Eugénie Ignace Augustine, became in time Empress of the French, and, as for many years she shone pre-eminent, her parentage and the early environments which served to form her character are now of vital interest.

A Scotchman named Kirkpatrick, who claimed to descend from the Stuarts, was driven out of his native land when they definitely lost the throne, and after some wanderings and a sojourn in the United States, finally settled in Malaga, Spain. His duties as American Consul affording him scant means and occupation, he also carried on there a small traffic in colonial wares. It is even claimed that he dispensed rare wines, in the little parlour behind the shop, to a select class of customers, who were waited upon by his wife and daughters. One of the latter, Manuela, had attended boarding-school in Paris, spending her holidays there with her aunt, Madame de Lesseps, the mother of the famous engineer of that name.

The two cousins, who were nearly of the same age, were very good friends, and there Manuela also met for the



THE EMPRESS EUGENIE.
From a Portrait by Winterhalter.



first time Don Cipriano, Count de Téba, a nobleman related to many of the oldest families in Spain, such as the Guzmans, Cordovas, etc. Eager to better herself, and to enjoy social advantages, Manuela determined to marry Don Cipriano; for although he was quite poor, far older than she, and had lost one eye in fighting for Napoleon I., she knew his elder brother was unmarried, and that Don Cipriano and his children would, therefore, ultimately inherit the family title, estates, and fortune. This shrewd calculation proved correct in time, although the family greatly objected to Don Cipriano's marriage at first, finding just fault with his wife. In her desire to shine in society, Manuela freely used her beauty and wit to attract to her salon fashionable people whose morals were not above reproach, but who enjoyed the free and easy intercourse which she encouraged. Don Cipriano, jealous of the many admirers who rallied around his gay young wife, first in Malaga, then in Grenada, and lastly in Madrid, where they lived in turn, criticised her behaviour harshly, but was very devoted to his children, whom he brought up to admire and almost worship his favourite hero, Napoleon.

The family reached Madrid when Eugénie was already eight years old, and, as her uncle was now dead, her father bore the title of Count de Montijo, and thus held an enviable position. Still he was very unhappy, for he loved quiet and solitude, and the many visitors who came to see his handsome and witty wife only roused his wrath. The Countess, nevertheless, continued to entertain, receiving not only the fast and fashionable set, but all the men of note in statecraft, science, and literature, many of whom have borne witness to her charm and intellectual brilliancy. Among the strangers who frequented her salon, we find Washington Irving, George

Ticknor, and Prosper Mérimée, who all mention her in their writings in laudatory terms. These visitors not only admired the beautiful Countess de Montijo, but made great pets of her children, both daughters being especially pretty and interesting maidens. Thus Eugénie was accustomed to society and adulation from babyhood, and early learned the attraction and power of her almost flawless beauty. In such surroundings, the coquetry and love of pleasure which she had inherited from her mother, would have made a mere flirt of the girl, had there not been at the same time a strong dose of her father's fearless and upright character in her composition. This combination made Eugénie delight, even as a little girl, in doing rather unusual and startling things, which, however, served to attract further attention to her.

Keen artistic perceptions, and an innate taste for dress, caused her to twine violets in her golden curls even when a mere child, and, pleased with the effect, she sent a shepherd lad to get the flowers high up in the mountains, when she could no longer obtain them down in the valley. A child of vivid imagination, these graceful blossoms further pleased her, because they were the Bonapartist emblem, for her father had told her how Napoleon had picked some on coming back from Elba, and she knew they served as badge for all his partisans. Her love for these dainty flowers was further heightened by an old crone who, seeing her crowned with violets, once predicted that "her happiness would bloom with those flowers," a prophecy which made a deep impression upon her childish and superstitious soul.

We are told that the Countess de Montijo's coquetry gave rise to much recrimination upon the part of her husband, and that frequent marital quarrels culminated in such complete estrangement, in 1834, that Manuela

gladly seized the double pretext afforded by cholera and political disturbances to leave Madrid with her three children.

She then went to France, where her son soon died, and from that time on, led a wandering life, seeking congenial society at the various fashionable watering-places, and spending gay winters in London or Paris. There, many of her old friends rallied around her, and, as she was as clever as beautiful, men of letters such as Laborde, Behle, and Mérimée came to see her almost daily. The latter, who had already known her in Spain, obtained from her the material for his well-known tale of "Carmen," which forms the theme of Bizet's famous opera of the same name. He was also very fond of Eugénie and of her sister, who delighted in the stories he told them, and enjoyed no greater treat than rambles in his company. The Countess de Montijo, whose own mode of life gave cause for censure, was nevertheless very careful of these two daughters, who were charming children, although allowed far more freedom than most girls of their time. Both girls delighted in active pursuits, and greatly enjoyed riding, gymnastic exercises, and dancing. The latter lessons they shared in 1836 with the children of the chief of police, and thus, it is said, Eugénie obtained a glimpse of Louis Napoleon when he passed through Paris, a prisoner, after his rash attempt at Strasbourg. Only ten years old, with an ardent admiration for the name of Napoleon, Eugénie gazed with sympathetic interest upon the prisoner on his way to exile, and this one glimpse proved enough to kindle a vivid spark of interest in her romantic little soul.

The next year she and her sister were boarding pupils in the convent school of the Sacred Heart in Paris, while their mother returned to Madrid. At school, Eugénie

was a general favourite, her beauty, spirit, and intelligence making her a natural leader there as well as everywhere else. Her ardour and enthusiasm were such that she studied and played with equal intensity, and was so deeply impressed with the devotion of the nuns, that she strove to emulate them in the rigid practices of religion. But the girls' school days were abruptly shortened by a sudden summons to Madrid, where their father lay dying, and where they arrived too late to receive his last blessing.

The whole Montijo fortune now passed into the hands of widow and children, who, after a brief season of mourning spent at their country-seat, returned to Madrid. The Countess de Montijo, at the zenith of her beauty and more charming than ever, was soon surrounded by the best society in town; and as she was as ambitious as before, she was determined to secure good matches for her beautiful daughters, who were now fifteen and sixteen years of age. Instead of keeping them in strict seclusion, she allowed them to see and be seen, and while guarding them carefully, did not object to their riding, driving, or attending concerts, theatres, and bull-fights, with their admirers, and under suitable chaperonage.

The girls, whose beauty was almost equal, although they were very unlike in colouring, received a great deal of attention, one of their admirers being the Duke of Berwick and Alva. But as his attentions were impartially divided between them, each secretly fancied herself beloved. Warm-hearted and enthusiastic as she was, Eugénie, therefore, imagined herself heart-broken when she overheard the young man ask for her sister's hand. In fact, she was so romantic and uncontrolled at that time, that it is said she procured poison, tried to kill her-

self, and was saved only with great difficulty from the fatal consequences of her childish folly. We are further told that this rash deed affected her superb health, leaving its traces in an almost imperceptible twitch of the eyelids, and an hysterical tendency when overtired or excited.

Although she imagined herself inconsolable, Eugénie soon recovered from her childish infatuation for her brother-in-law, whom she instead learned to love in a purely fraternal way, and with whom she was subsequently always on the best of terms. Her sister being married, Eugénie now monopolised most of the attention of her mother's guests, who greatly admired her daring horsemanship, her striking costumes, her unconventional manners, and raved over her red-gold hair, blue eyes, dazzling complexion, delicately pencilled eyebrows long, dark lashes, pearly teeth, beautiful hands and feet, and perfect form. Her elegance, grace, vivid imagination, and bright intellect, as well as her beauty, attracted attention everywhere, and she received all this homage with queenly condescension and without the least ostentation.

At the bull-fights, Eugénie was the cynosure of all eyes, and her enthusiasm for the Toréador's skill then reached such a pitch, that she publicly bestowed upon him a gay cap, which rumour claimed was embroidered by her own fair hands. This notoriety, which would have either dismayed or turned the head of any girl brought up in a different way, seemed a mere matter of course to Eugénie, to whom adulation had been a daily meed from babyhood, and who never rated it highly, while she craved for it through habit.

The Countess de Montijo, who had long striven to obtain a position at court through her numerous influential friends, was finally appointed first lady of honour to Queen Isabella, an exalted post which fully satisfied her

ambitions. She now entertained more than ever, and her salon was frequented not only by ambassadors, Spanish Grandees, and all her former habitués, but also by many distinguished foreigners, including the sons of Louis Philip, King of the French, who came to Madrid for matrimonial purposes. Eugénie and her mother naturally took part in the royal wedding festivities, and thus grew well acquainted with the two young princes, who never forgot them. Indeed, the Duke d'Aumale, meeting the Empress Eugénie many years later, in the Bay of Naples, ventured to remind her of old times, by saying: "What a lovely young girl you were, Empress," at which she immediately retorted: "And what a delightful, courteous young man, you were."

But the gay life at the Spanish court came to an abrupt end. It is said that the Countess de Montijo, having violated some of the proprieties too openly, was asked to resign; but it is probable that court life, with its rigid etiquette, speedily lost all charms for her, and that she was not sorry to relinquish the coveted position after enjoying it only three months.

Eugénie, too, was weary of the worldly pleasures which she had so long enjoyed. Even in the midst of social whirl, she had always been very devout, and feeling dissatisfied and unsettled, she now determined to do something really great by renouncing the world, and all its attractions, to become a nun. Such a life appealed to her poetical mind and ardent nature, and she really fancied for a while that she had a vocation for a religious life. But when she reached the convent where she intended to seek admittance, a crazy nun exclaimed: "My daughter, do not seek for rest within our walls, you are called to adorn a throne!"

Eugénie seems to have considered this prophecy

a leading of Providence, for with all her Spanish superstition and impulsiveness, she immediately relinquished all idea of becoming a recluse. With her mother, she again travelled from one fashionable resort to another, easily eclipsing all the other women by her extraordinary beauty, grace, intelligence, and wit. Those whom she thus outshone, jealous of her superior attractions, severely criticised the mannish dress she adopted for athletic sports, and commented unkindly upon her frankness of speech and freedom of manner, which, while it offered a strong contrast to the conventional young lady of the day, was nothing more than the liberty now conceded to every American girl abroad. In spite of all these ill-natured remarks, and of the title of adventuress, which her detractors freely bestowed upon her, they never could accuse her of anything worse than unconventionality bordering upon imprudence, and never succeeded in producing even the slightest shadow of a proof to their slanderous allegations.

Eugénie, having been brought up in Spain, France, and England, spoke all three languages with equal fluency and ease, and prolonged sojourns in Madrid, Paris, and London enabled her to become acquainted with most of the prominent men in Europe, who, one and all, greatly enjoyed talking to her. We are told that she was in boarding-school in England, when Louis Napoleon returned from his American exile, that she keenly regretted the failure of his Boulogne attempt in 1840, and felt so sorry when he was imprisoned in the fortress of Ham, that she actually wrote to a mutual friend, placing her fortune at Napoleon's disposal if it would enable him to escape and attain his ends.

Some people even claim that she frequently met Louis Napoleon in London in 1847–48, where the

romantic interest she had long felt in the nephew of the illustrious emperor rapidly deepened into love. It is also said that Louis Napoleon was so far from insensible to her charms, that he then urged her to marry him; but she insisted upon his postponing all such matters until he had reached his goal, when, perchance, he might have more ambitious views. The Revolution of 1848, and expulsion of Louis Philip, enabled Napoleon to re-enter France, where, before the end of the year, he became Prince-President of the Second French Republic.

This was only the first step in his new political career, for in 1851 he achieved the Coup d'État, which resulted in his almost unanimous election to the Imperial throne in the following year. Even as Prince-President, Louis Napoleon entertained a great deal at the Elysée, and when the Countess de Montijo and Eugénie reappeared in Paris, they were naturally included among his guests. Still, some people claim that Napoleon and Eugénie met here for the first time, although they had long known about each other through mutual friends.

At the Elysée, — as elsewhere, — Eugénie was the handsomest of all the women present; but while Louis Napoleon evidently admired her, he did not distinguish her in any marked way. She and her mother were, however, invited to a hunting party at Fontainebleau, where Eugénie's daring horsemanship so charmed Napoleon that he begged his fair guest to accept the horse she rode with such grace and skill. Every fall, Napoleon went to Compiègne, also, where he invited series of guests to take part in the hunts which were given there. Eugénie and her mother were among the invited, and they, too, enjoyed the afternoon rides in the beautiful forest, and the dances or fine plays which succeeded a formal evening meal.



Eugénie

Some authorities aver that the gallant Prince-President often served here as escort to his charming guest, contriving once to lose his way in the mazes of the forest, where she relieved the wants of a poor family, and where he took advantage of the solitude to propose again. They state that the proposal was accepted then and there, although the engagement was kept so secret that, while many suspected, none felt sure of its existence. Other authorities state that the Prince-President — whose morals were none of the best — made use of this opportunity to press a dishonourable suit, which the lady indignantly rejected. But the rumours afloat concerning this matter are so numerous and contradictory, that it is not likely we shall get at the real truth of the matter for many years to come.

Although deeply smitten with Mademoiselle de Montijo's charms, Napoleon seemed very reluctant at first to conclude an alliance which might prove detrimental to the accomplishment of his ambitious projects. These were his first consideration, and we are told that as soon as he had become Emperor, he sent a friend to the Countess de Montijo to explain that, as the sovereign of a great people, he could not openly take Eugénie to wife until his position was more assured; but that he was anxious in the mean time to settle the matter by a private marriage. This doubtful offer was haughtily refused by both mother and daughter, the latter declaring such an action unworthy of both parties, and adding: "Not a shade of suspicion must ever rest on the wife of a Cæsar!"

Not long after, Eugénie is said to have made this fact equally plain to Napoleon himself, if court gossip can be credited. It seems that many ladies had been invited to witness a review from the windows

of the Tuileries. Riding up beneath the window where Mademoiselle de Montijo sat, Napoleon stopped, looked up, and inquired pointedly, "How can I reach you, Mademoiselle?" With equal presence of mind and wit, Eugénie clearly answered with a gracious smile, "By way of the Chapel, Monseigneur," for the nearest entrance lay through the Castle Chapel, which was connected with the apartment where she sat by a small stairway.

The marriage of a prince is always a serious question, concerning his family and people as well as himself. Queen Hortense, the mother of Napoleon III., had been anxious to have him marry his cousin Mathilde, for whom he had felt a boyish inclination. But after his arrest at Strasbourg, the lady's father refused to sanction an alliance between them, and instead gave his daughter in marriage to the Russian millionaire Demidoff. This union proved so unhappy, that the couple soon lived apart; but as the Pope would not grant them a divorce, Princess Mathilde was debarred from marrying again, and Napoleon was therefore forced to seek a wife elsewhere. He is said to have sued in vain for Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, German, and English princesses, all of whom refused to marry him, because his position seemed far from secure at that time, and none of these ladies were anxious to experience the sad fate which had befallen so many French queens, empresses, and princesses during the past fifty years.

These repeated disappointments, added to his undoubted love for the beautiful Eugénie de Montijo, finally determined Napoleon to take her openly for his wife, after making sure there was no obstacle to their union by asking her frankly whether she had ever loved. Eugénie, who was ever truthful, answered bravely: "I

would deceive you, sire, did I not confess that my heart has been touched, indeed several times, but I can assure you of one thing, that is, that I am still Mademoiselle de Montijo." "Then you shall be Empress," exclaimed Napoleon, who proceeded to make good his word in spite of the manifold and vehement objections raised by his family and friends. He overruled them all in his usual calm, quiet, impressive way, keeping his intentions as secret as possible in the mean time, although many anecdotes are told to prove that straws indicated to his ever-watchful partisans which way the current was tending.

Among these anecdotes the following seem pretty well authenticated. The Countess de Montijo and her daughter naturally formed part of the series of guests invited to Compiègne and Fontainebleau, where the Emperor was, however, careful not to favour one guest more than another. The entertainment at these places was often very simple, and after dinner the guests frequently indulged in impromptu hops, to the music of a mechanical piano which boasted only three tunes, a waltz, a polka, and a quadrille. These airs were ground out by obliging guests in turn, the Emperor taking his place at the crank as well as on the floor, where he danced impartially with all the ladies present. He also walked and rode with them in the forest, kindling a fire for them at times in some hunting lodge, and enjoying the rambles and picnics on the grass as much as any of his young guests.

One day, when strolling over the dewy lawn with Mademoiselle de Montijo, Napoleon saw her pause to admire a clover-leaf delicately spangled with dew-drops which sparkled like diamonds. A few moments later the Emperor took occasion to whisper a few words to his friend and relative Bacchiocchi, who soon after vanished.

That evening, after his return, the Emperor started forfeit games, in the course of which he artfully contrived to bestow dainty souvenirs upon each of his lady-guests. But although the gifts were apparently apportioned by chance, Eugénie received a dainty enamelled clover leaf breastpin, studded with small diamond dew-drops, an exact counterpart of the leaf she had innocently admired that very morning.

This dainty token, which Eugénie generally called her "talisman," either plainly visible or partly concealed, always formed part of her toilet, simple or elaborate, until the Emperor died, when it was sadly laid aside. But the Empress resumed it when her son left for Zululand, and wore it constantly until the news reached her that he, too, was no more. The talisman was then discarded for good and all, and soon after bestowed upon a dear friend, the Duchess de Mouchy, with the touching request that she should wear it, and that it might bring her nothing but happiness. It was also during one of these sojourns at Compiègne or Fontainebleau that the Emperor once twisted a flowering spray into the semblance of a crown, and placing it lightly upon Mademoiselle de Montijo's glossy curls, softly whispered: "I hope soon to replace it with a better."

These attentions, although viewed with pleasure by the Countess de Montijo and the fair recipient, were very distasteful to Napoleon's friends, some of whom are said actually to have gone down on their knees in their efforts to make him desist. Besides, we are told that an English lady who had followed him to France, refused to yield her place to any but a woman of royal blood, and that he had considerable trouble in severing his illicit connection with her. To one and all, however, he expressed the same iron-like resolve: "I have decided to

marry Mademoiselle de Montijo, and I shall marry her," so in time all were forced to yield.

Still, while he seemed indifferent to the opinion of his family and friends, he was anxious to know how this proposed marriage would strike outsiders. He, therefore, suddenly asked a witty court lady, with whom he was dancing, whether she would advise a Polish or a Spanish alliance? The lady, who must have had some inkling of the state of affairs, delighted him by replying, as if it were merely a matter of choice between the characteristic national dances: "Sire, if the choice is left to me, I always prefer the Cachucka to the Mazurka!"

This lady's opinion was not, however, shared by every one, and some of the court dames were so anxious to put down the fair lady who attracted more than they considered her share of imperial attention, that they were actually rude. One of these ladies, the wife of a Cabinet minister, showed her aversion for Mademoiselle de Montijo so plainly, at the New Year's ball at the Elysée, that Eugénie could not conceal her chagrin. The Emperor, perceiving it, compelled her to tell him what had caused it, and when she informed him, with tears in her eyes, that she could never come to court again to be so insulted, he quietly answered: "I will avenge you. No one will dare insult you after to-morrow."

The very next day, as French etiquette requires, the Emperor sent his best friend to call upon the Countess de Montijo, and make a formal proposal for her daughter in his name. Of course, the proposal was duly accepted, but although the Countess de Montijo was elated at the thought of the grand match her daughter was about to conclude, she also dreaded seeing her seated upon a throne which had made so many women unhappy, and wrote to a friend: "I do not know

whether I should be happy or whether I should weep. How many mothers envy me, who could not understand the tears with which my eyes are filled. Eugénie is to be queen over your France, and, in spite of myself, I remember that with you queens have but little happiness. In spite of myself, the thought of Marie Antoinette takes possession of me, and I wonder if my child will not have the same fate?"

The first rumour of the event which so greatly pleased the Emperor, Eugénie, and her mother, not only caused a drop on 'Change, but made the Emperor's friends draw long faces, although they knew that the bride he had chosen, had, as he expressed it, "intellect enough for two persons, and courage enough for three." His choice being definitely made, however, it now behooved him to impart the news to the Council of State, the Senate, and the Legislative Assembly, which he did a few days later, in the following speech: —

"I accede to the wish so often manifested by my people in announcing my marriage to you. The union which I am about to contract is not in harmony with old political traditions, and in this lies its advantage. France, by her successive revolutions, has been widely sundered from the rest of Europe. A wise government should so rule as to bring her back within the circle of ancient monarchies. But this result will be more readily obtained by a frank and straightforward policy, by a loyal intercourse, than by royal alliances, which often create false security and subordinate national to family interests. Moreover, past examples have left superstitious beliefs in the popular mind. The people have not forgotten that for sixty years foreign princesses have mounted the steps of the throne only to see their race scattered and proscribed, either by war or revolution.

Eugénie

"One woman alone appears to have brought with her good fortune, and lives, more than all the rest in the memory of the people; and this woman, the wife of General Bonaparte, was not of royal blood. We must admit this much, however: in 1810, the marriage of Napoleon I. with Marie Louise was a great event. It was a bond for the future, and a real gratification to the national pride. But when, in the face of ancient Europe, one is carried by the force of a new principle to the level of the old dynasties, it is not by affecting an ancient descent, and endeavouring at any price to enter the family of kings, that one compels recognition. It is rather by remembering one's origin; it is by preserving one's own character, and assuming frankly toward Europe the position of a parvenu, — a glorious title when one rises by the suffrages of a great people. Thus impelled, as I have been, to depart from the precedents that have been hitherto followed, my marriage is only a private matter.

"It remained for me to choose a wife. She who has become the object of my choice is of lofty birth, French in heart and education, and by the memory of the blood shed by her father in the cause of the Empire. She has, as a Spaniard, the advantages of not having a family in France to whom it would be necessary to give honours and dignities. She is endowed with the choicest gifts of heart and mind; she will grace the throne and prove its strongest support in the hour of danger. A good Roman Catholic, she will join me in fervent prayer for the welfare of France. Lovely and good, — of this I am certain, — she will recall the virtues of the Empress Josephine. I have, therefore, come here to tell France that I have chosen a consort whom I love and esteem, in preference to a stranger through whom I might, perchance, have secured advantages, but for whom I might



also have been called upon to make great sacrifices. Without slighting any one, I am following my own inclinations, after considering everything carefully and prudently. While I prefer independence, good qualities, and domestic happiness, to possible dynastic advantages and ambitious calculations, I shall be none the less powerful because I am wholly my own master.

"I am going immediately to Notre Dame, to present the future Empress to the nation and army. The trust which they have shown me will surely be granted in all its fulness to the one whom I have chosen, and when you have made her acquaintance, gentlemen, I am sure you, too, will feel certain that I have been led by the hand of Providence."

This announcement, for which the public had been duly prepared by a notice in the official journal, was well received by the majority of the nation. Not only were the people pleased to hear of the Emperor's marriage, but the flavour of romance in his choice of a bride charmed them greatly. The fact that the future Empress was young, beautiful, and accomplished, that she had spent a good part of her life in France, and was familiar with the customs and language of the country, was also in her favour. Hardly an objection was now raised, for, as one man frankly told the Emperor: "In the presence of a probability, sire, I express my opinion freely. But in presence of an actual fact, I am in the habit of keeping still, and therefore I consider perfect a thing which can no longer be avoided."

It was, indeed, too late to object, for only one week was to elapse between the announcement of the Emperor's marriage and its solemnisation at the Tuileries and Notre Dame. So brief a space of time required great activity of preparation, and the whole city was soon in a

whirl of gossip and excitement. Of course, every one wanted to know all they could about the bride, whose sayings and doings were widely canvassed, while her pictures were sold in great quantities. People also spoke of her many admirers, of the great men she might have married, and whispered that she had already refused two of Napoleon's cousins, Prince Napoleon and Count Camerata. The latter is even said to have followed Eugénie from place to place, and reported to have committed suicide in his despair when the imperial marriage was announced.

Imitation is the sincerest flattery, and Eugénie, who, had always been greatly admired, was now carefully studied by the women, some of whom actually bleached their hair, or used gold powder to secure that rare red-gold tint, and hairdressers immediately devised wigs, curls, and braids for ladies who were not blessed with a wealth of curly locks. It is also said that cosmetic dealers and dentists found their business greatly improved, for all the help of art was called into requisition to reproduce Eugénie's complexion, or reveal, as she did, a dazzling row of pearly teeth between half-open lips.

Eugénie and her mother moved from their apartment to the Elysée Palace, — which they were to occupy until the wedding, — Napoleon having already taken possession of his uncle's old quarters in the Tuileries. In fact, Countess de Montijo and her daughter had scant time wherein to purchase an elaborate trousseau; but wherever they went they were followed and admired, the newspapers chronicling their every motion, and expatiating upon the beauty of the future Empress. Her kindness, too, aroused great enthusiasm, and people told how she sent a wounded workman home in her own carriage, picked up a stray child, and on revisiting her old school

recognised all her former friends and teachers, and affectionately kissed the nuns detailed to fulfil the humblest tasks.

The newspapers were, however, quite right in calling public attention to the coming Empress' benevolence and good memory, for throughout her reign she was never weary of furthering charitable enterprises, and possessed from the first the truly royal gift of never forgetting the faces or names of those who had once been presented to her. As wedding presents are the natural concomitants of most marriages, various cities of France prepared their offerings, the city of Paris voting 600,000 francs for the purchase of a diamond necklace. Eugénie won golden opinions by begging — in a charming letter addressed to the Prefect — that this sum might rather serve to found a home, where poor girls would be trained to earn their living. This charitable request was duly granted, and, in memory of the ornament the city wished to offer the beautiful sovereign, the buildings were disposed in a semi-circle to simulate a necklace. There, poor girls were taught to embroider, make lace and artificial flowers, draw, set type, sew, mend, wash, iron, and cook, and trained to be good housekeepers as well as capable wage-earners. At twenty-one, when due competency had been attained, each girl received a small sum of money, which enabled her either to marry or to set up for herself in her chosen business. This proved a useful and successful institution, which was often visited by Eugénie, whose generosity was commemorated by an allegorical painting representing her in bridal robes, offering her glittering diamond necklace to a group of orphan children.

But if the future Empress was generous and charitable, the Emperor was both thoughtful and considerate,

for, fearing lest the jewellers might be disappointed, he purchased the necklace and placed it in the "corbeille," — the usual wedding gift offered by a French bridegroom to his bride. This was, however, only one of the items forming it, another being, — as custom prescribes, — a dainty purse full of gold. But whereas bridal purses generally hold small sums, Eugénie's contained 250,000 francs. This amount she also bestowed in charity, after consulting her lover, who paid her daily visits at the Elysée, never failing to bring her a bunch of choice flowers. This brief courtship, in which the public took so lively an interest, was soon over, for the civil marriage took place on the 29th of January, 1853, in the Hall of Marshals in the Tuileries, in the presence of the Emperor's family and of about one thousand dignitaries and invited guests.

Eugénie, dressed in a wonderful gown of point d'Alençon lace over white satin, wore natural flowers in her hair, and many costly pearls. A Spanish lady, seeing her thus attired, implored her to remove those unlucky jewels, reminding her of a Spanish superstition to the effect that the more pearls a bride wears on her wedding day, the more tears she will shed throughout the rest of her life. But Eugénie, generally so superstitious, insisted upon retaining her pearls, and thus decked out, she drove to the Tuileries with her mother and with the Spanish ambassador. She was received on alighting from the carriage by Prince Napoleon and Princess Mathilde (children of Jerome Bonaparte, and hence first cousins to the Emperor), who escorted her up the stairs to the hall where the Emperor awaited her in gala uniform. He immediately led her into the Hall of Marshals, where seats had been placed for them both.

The brief ceremony was quickly performed, and the

marriage contract signed and witnessed by the contracting parties, the Countess de Montijo, the Spanish ambassador, and the Imperial family. It was engrossed on the Imperial register, where the last entry was the baptism of the infant King of Rome, forty-two years before. The ceremony over, the Emperor and his bride led the way to the palace theatre, where they and their guests were entertained by a cantata composed by Auber, wherein occurred the following complimentary mention of the Empress and of her sunny native land: —

"Ah, beautiful Spain,
With thy skies ever bright,
Thou hast formed her for us
From a ray of sunlight."

At eleven, Eugénie returned to the Elysée, escorted by her mother, and early the next morning Napoleon visited her to attend Mass and take communion privately with her before setting out for Notre Dame, where the religious marriage was to be celebrated with great pomp. Dressed in white velvet, wearing all the crown jewels, including the famous "Regent," which sparkled on her breast, and the rose-diamond belt, Eugénie was draped in the misty folds of a wonderful lace veil — the gift of the city of Liége — which fell from the diadem crowning her graceful head. At half-past eleven she drove to the Tuileries, where she was received with all the honours shown to a sovereign, and at twelve, bells rang and cannons pealed their one hundred and one salutes. The Emperor now appeared on the balcony of the Tuileries, to present his bride to the assembled people, who cheered madly at the sight of her radiant beauty. The cortege soon after left the Tuileries, the Emperor and Empress sitting side by side in the wonderful glass coach first used for the coronation of Napoleon and Josephine.



Eugénie

Owing to its transparent sides, Eugénie could be seen as plainly as if she had been riding in an open carriage, and her appearance wrung prolonged and repeated murmurs of admiration from the throngs on either side of the street.

When the coach started from the Tuileries, there was a curious repetition of an accident which is said to have happened when Marie Louise set out to be married, for the gilt crown surmounting the roof suddenly toppled over and fell. This accident, although speedily repaired, was viewed by many in the light of an evil omen. The glittering procession of state carriages, and troops in gala uniform, passed slowly along the rue de Rivoli, between hedges of spectators who cheered lustily, almost drowning the music of the military bands stationed all along the way. Amid flowers, music, and acclamations, the Imperial party drove to Notre Dame, arriving there only at one o'clock.

The cathedral, magnificently decorated in red velvet, gold fringe, and trophies of flags, was brilliantly illuminated by thousands of tapers, which poured down floods of light upon the gay uniforms, dainty gowns, the flowers, jewels, and orders of the brilliant assembly impatiently awaiting the arrival of the bridal party. All at once, a signal was given, the clergy moved slowly down the aisle, the doors were flung open, and the archbishop welcomed Napoleon and Eugénie as they appeared on the cathedral threshold. Here, dazzled by the lights and overcome by emotion, Eugénie faltered and almost fainted, but collecting herself bravely, she soon advanced at the Emperor's side toward the nave, where two thrones had been erected on a small platform.

The Archbishop of Paris immediately began the impressive service, which proved so affecting to the bride,

that the Master of Ceremonies feared she would faint, and overheard the Emperor whisper words of encouragement to her, while tactfully helping her through the long, trying ceremony as much as he could. But although the Emperor and the Master of Ceremonies were anxious, Eugénie's self-control and dignity stood her in such good stead, that the spectators gazing upon her, commented with delight upon her simple, modest, and graceful behaviour.

All the people were charmed when the Emperor proudly led her out of church after the Te Deum, and Cassagnac justly declared: "She entered Notre Dame chosen by the Emperor, she left it adopted by France."

The people received her with thunders of applause as she stepped out of the cathedral, and her return home proved one long ovation. But, in spite of all these joyful acclamations, which she acknowledged so gracefully, a shadow lingered in the Empress' beautiful blue eyes; for even then, in the midst of her youth, joy, and beauty, an awful presentiment seized her, and she repeatedly fancied she could see Marie Antoinette's pale and woe-begone face, peering out at her here and there amid the dense ranks of the multitude.

On arriving at the Tuileries, their Majesties again appeared on the balcony, before setting out for St. Cloud, where they intended to spend their brief honeymoon in as much privacy and seclusion as the great can obtain. The Emperor made use of this opportunity to drive his beautiful bride through the park to Ville d'Avray and Versailles, taking no servant with him, and followed by no escort. Arrived at Versailles, Napoleon took Eugénie into the palace, where she gazed in mournful admiration at the various portraits of Marie Antoinette, whose life and belongings assumed a strange fascination from the

moment when she first donned the jewels which had once adorned this unhappy queen.

A few days later, in accompanying her husband to the newly arranged Museum of Sovereigns in the Louvre, Eugénie begged to see Marie Antoinette's testamentary letter, and tears came into her eyes when she heard the touching words in which this heartbroken mother bade farewell to life, and committed her children to the loving care of her sister, Madame Elizabeth.

Not only did the new Empress begin her married life by supplying funds for various charitable works; but the first favour she begged of her husband was the pardon of 4312 persons who had been exiled or transported for political offences. She warmly interceded for all such criminals, and once tried to convince the Emperor that it was impossible a man should find time to conspire against any government when he had a wife and six children to support! As her logic was not irrefutable, the Emperor merely laughed; but he granted her request, for he was notoriously soft-hearted, and never liked to deny anything to his beautiful consort. Although forty-five at the time of his marriage, Napoleon was as much in love as any youth, and he always paid Eugénie lover-like attentions, calling her by pet names, admiring her more than any one else, and being as faithful to her as a man of his lack of principle could be.

Napoleon was, however, only one of Eugénie's many admirers, for no one could withhold the meed of praise she so well deserved. She filled her place with a grace and dignity which charmed every one, and her old friend Prosper Mérimée declares that from the moment of her marriage, "she was not merely the central figure of an admirable living picture, but a veritable sovereign. She knew how to speak and how to keep silence, she saw

clearly and correctly, because she sought what was good, and studied the duties of her state to devote herself to them." Her husband, too, bore delighted witness to her virtues, declaring, "no woman could suit me better; she is unselfish, cheerful, good, and intelligent." Besides he always liked to have her with him whenever he visited any charitable institution, for her tact and kindliness enabled her to do just the right thing. Her first visit of this kind was to the educational establishment of the Legion of Honour, at St. Denis, where the Emperor told the pupils: "I am happier than on my previous visit, because this time I am accompanied by the Empress, who will be henceforth the protectress of this establishment, and who will discharge this duty so admirably."

Napoleon and Eugénie rambled together through the quaint old city before visiting the ancient cathedral, where all the Kings of France had been laid to rest in tombs which remained inviolate until the Revolution. There, again, the Empress was most attracted by the statue of Marie Antoinette, whose remains had been removed thither while the Bourbons occupied the French throne.

The new Empress was also present when the Emperor formally opened the Legislative Assembly. On this occasion, she was accompanied by her mother, and attended by all the court ladies, and when she took her seat in the gallery, the deputies greeted her with enthusiastic cheers. This was the last state function at which the Countess de Montijo appeared before her return to Spain under the escort of her old friend Prosper Mérimée. The latter, on his return to France, was called to the Senate by the Emperor, who gave him this post principally because he knew it would please Eugénie. Indeed her delight was so great when told of this appointment, that she kissed her husband rapturously, although some of her

attendants happened to be present at the time, and she was seldom publicly demonstrative.

Mérimée, a talented writer, whose wit and talents charmed every one, was ever welcome at court, where he playfully styled himself "the court fool of the Empress," for she delighted in his entertaining conversation, and greatly enjoyed his tales and jests. He admired the ease and dignity with which she played her part in court pageants, and he and Cassagnac often commented upon it. In fact, the latter has stated that "the distinctive trait of the Empress Eugénie was elegance in all things, — in mind, in tastes, in her manner of receiving, and in her person. It was through this quality, which seems essentially French, and of which Paris is the supreme judge, that during seventeen years she exerted an unexampled prestige around her, — not simply in the sphere of the throne, but in all the social circles in which she entered during the course of her journeys. She was beautiful and gracious everywhere and to all, — among patricians and among peasants, at Paris and Biarritz. Although many women especially favoured by nature and by fortune have attracted admiration and received homage at court, no one has ever heard it said that a single one of them has equalled, much less eclipsed, the brilliancy of the Empress."

Not only was Eugénie the first, but Providence made her the most beautiful woman in the land, and as her dress was always tasteful and original, she soon became leader of fashion too. Gifted with an artistic appreciation of colour and form, she naturally studied effect, and as the Emperor bade her encourage French manufactures as much as she could, she set an example by spending money freely for the silks and velvets of Lyons, the laces of Alençon and Valenciennes, etc., etc. Dress, from her

point of view, became an artistic frame for her uncommon beauty, which was so nearly perfect that she could wear anything she chose and always look charming in it.

The papers, from the very first, chronicled her every look and gesture, minutely described her attire on every occasion, and praised her without stint. This admiration — to which she had long been accustomed on a smaller scale, for she was always a leader wherever she went — was naturally very pleasing to the Empress. It is also said that she eagerly read all the notices concerning herself, and that, although she laughed over the exaggerated expressions of adulation, she nevertheless craved this sort of notoriety.

Charmed with her beauty, grace, and elegance, touched by her benevolence and circumspect behaviour, — for Eugénie never had favourites of either sex, — the people all loved her in the beginning of her reign. But when the novelty of popular admiration began to wear off, the Empress, who was accustomed to travel, variety, change, and congenial society, necessarily found court life irksome and monotonous in the extreme. For a woman who had enjoyed an unusual amount of freedom, and who delighted in athletic sports and in open-air pursuits, the restraints of her position were particularly trying.

For instance, she was never alone, but escorted in all her walks and drives not only by the court lady whose turn it happened to be to attend her, but by officers detailed to watch over her safety. Even meals were seldom enjoyed in private, for under the Second Empire the court dignitaries on duty always dined with their Majesties, who were thus constantly in representation. These dinners were, however, often very simple, the Emperor encouraging merry general conversation, with-

out ever permitting any gossip at all. Even state meals lasted a remarkably short time, for the service was so perfect that their Majesties seldom remained more than three-quarters of an hour at table.

The evenings, too, were quite a bore; for when the Empress did not attend a theatre, concert, or some state function, the household invariably assembled after dinner in the Hall of Apollo. There the ladies never sat down until the Emperor bade them; while etiquette required the gentlemen to stand all evening, unless the exigencies of some game required their being seated. Young and old, therefore, stood around singly or in groups, hour after hour, beguiling time by conversation; for their Majesties had no real love for music, cards, or any other games. Besides the Empress, who was a very rapid reader, generally preferred to peruse privately the books which interested her most, and the Emperor was bored when anything was read aloud which was not of a political or scientific turn. Such books as these, however, are not appropriate for reading in general society, so the entertainment was restricted to conversation in which the Empress bravely did her share, trying to atone for the taciturnity of her spouse.

All personalities being strictly debarred at court, the interest often flagged, and although Eugénie heroically tried to keep the conversational ball rolling briskly, it often required all her tact and intelligence to prevent awful pauses. Young and active-minded, she was loath to retire early, and as etiquette forbade her guests leaving until she had done so, the evenings were often prolonged until eleven or twelve. Besides, the disagreeable duty of *dismissing* guests always seemed so discourteous to her, that she often hesitated to give the necessary



word or sign permitting her interlocutor to withdraw, and thus, at times, — through sheer kindness of heart, — suffered herself and inflicted upon others painful embarrassment.

As long as the Emperor stood, none of the court ladies sat down; but he was too thoughtful to keep them standing long, and often took a seat when he would have preferred to stand, to invite them to do likewise. Very frequently, however, the Emperor lingered but a moment among his guests to admire his wife's sprightly conversation, ere he withdrew to his library, to attend to matters of state or pursue the studies he loved. At the close of the evening, Eugénie invariably took leave of her guests by a deep, characteristic curtsey, which gracefully included the people all around her, and which no one ever succeeded in imitating with any accuracy. But a lady informs us that the door no sooner closed behind her, than the unfortunate courtiers all sank into the nearest seats, uttering sighs and groans of relief; for they were often very footsore long before the evening was over.

Eugénie's private apartments were directly over those of the Emperor, and communicated with them by a private staircase, which enabled the Imperial couple to see each other very frequently in the course of the day. To spare his wife any extra fatigue, the Emperor placed a gong at the head of this staircase, which she struck whenever she wanted him to come up to her, and did not care to send for him through a servant. The rooms which Eugénie occupied, and which had once belonged to Josephine, and since to Marie Amélie, were rather ugly when she first took possession of them; but in time they were altered to suit her taste, and finally became dainty enough to please their artistic mistress. These rooms



were decorated with beautiful pictures, and in one stood a huge mirror which reflected the palace garden, the Place de la Concorde, the long stretch of the Champs Élysées, and the Arch of Triumph closing the perspective, more than a mile away.

Although Eugénie had a private oratory where Mass was often celebrated for her only, she attended the service in the Castle Chapel every Sunday. Many of the court dignitaries had spacious apartments in the Tuileries, where they enjoyed family life, entertaining their friends as freely as if living in their own houses. But the palace, built in an age when sanitary plumbing and steam-heating were equally unknown, is said to have been a pleasant residence only during a small part of the year. It was very cold in winter, and so ill-ventilated and poorly lighted, that lamps were kept burning in the narrow corridors night and day. Besides, all the water had to be carried up to the upper floors, so housekeeping was not easy. This lack of conveniences made the palace uninhabitable as soon as warm weather began, so the inmates were glad to change their residence to St. Cloud, and thus escape from its pestilential odours.

Count Tascher de la Pagerie, Grand Master of Ceremonies of the Empress' household, lived with his numerous family in the Tuileries, and often gave masked balls, which their Majesties attended in disguise, and where they greatly enjoyed mystifying their friends. These balls proved a welcome break in the monotony of the Imperial lives, and Emperor and Empress always felt perfectly safe; for, aside from the usual sentinels and guards, the Tuileries were filled with detectives in uniform and in plain clothes. Their duty was to scrutinise every person who appeared, to follow the various inmates of the palace wherever they went, and be ready to help

them in any emergency. Whenever a masquerade was given in any part of the palace, the guests were forced to remove their masks for a moment, so that the detectives might scan their features, and thus make sure that no uninvited guests forced their way into the palace. Thus their Majesties were constantly guarded, the chief-of-police making a point of following the Emperor wherever he went, so as to protect him against any attempt at assassination.

The Emperor and Eugénie had not been married many months before they removed to St. Cloud, where the latter delighted in the beautiful park with its secular trees, spouting fountains, delightful glades, and choice flowers. The palace itself was a most charming residence, sufficiently near the capital to enable the Emperor to attend to business there, while enjoying country air and freedom. But whereas he was called into the city almost daily, the Empress went there very seldom, preferring to revel in the shade, and take long walks in the park, often climbing to the lantern of Demosthenes to enjoy the view, which extended over the whole city of Paris. This sight was particularly impressive on clear nights, when the city lights twinkled in the distance, and the capital looked like some luminous monster crouching in the plain.

The Imperial couple remained at St. Cloud until the month of August, when they journeyed to Dieppe, where they were received with great rejoicings, and revelled in invigorating sea baths. Their sojourn there ended, Napoleon and Eugénie made a tour through Northern France, visiting Arras, Valenciennes, St. Omer, Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne, and receiving everywhere great ovations and characteristic presents. In the last-named town, for instance, a deputation of fishermen presented Eugénie



with a huge silver fish in a net of silver tissue, making an appropriate speech. When Napoleon and Eugénie visited the Amiens Cathedral, the bishop assured the Empress, in the most high-flown terms, of her welcome to a town where a saint bearing her name had long enjoyed a peculiar veneration.

This journey ended, their Majesties enjoyed another peaceful fortnight at St. Cloud before going to Compiègne for the hunting season. In this castle, Napoleon and Eugénie entertained in much the same way as the English aristocracy in their country homes, keeping the house full of guests, who came for a week at a time, in groups or series. These were carefully planned to include aristocrats, statesmen, men of science or letters, as well as distinguished foreigners, with their wives and daughters. Eugénie, who had herself been a guest at Compiègne the previous autumn, now made a most charming hostess, entertaining her guests, riding with them to meet, following the hunt at times, and presiding over the picnic-lunches and stately dinners with equal ease and grace.

The numerous guests, who generally passed their mornings as they chose, spent most of the afternoon out of doors, and in the evening often enjoyed the picturesque sight of the "curée" or torchlight quarry, when the hounds were fed on the remains of the game. Plays and informal dances also formed part of the evening entertainment, which was graced by the ladies in their finest toilets, each guest deeming it incumbent upon her to bring at least fifteen new gowns, and never to appear twice in the same. This rivalry in dress, which pleased the Emperor because it encouraged trade, was, however, a heavy tax upon the guests, some of whom actually refused invitations to Compiègne because they felt they

could not incur such an expense. The gentlemen, being exempt from the same tyranny of fashion, were, however, only too glad to form part of the series, which included all the men of the time who distinguished themselves in any walk of art, music, science, literature, and jurisprudence.

In 1853, only two series of guests were invited, for their Majesties spent only a fortnight at Compiègne. But although that time was devoted principally to recreation, the Emperor convened his council there several times, so as to settle pressing matters of state. When first elected Emperor, he boldly proclaimed that "Empire means Peace," but, in spite of this fact, he longed to emulate his uncle's military achievements. He was, therefore, not sorry to see a war gradually rising in Eastern Europe, where Russia and Turkey were on the verge of a quarrel, in which France and England were ready to take part. While watching the slow development of this crisis, Napoleon returned to St. Cloud, and went from thence to Paris, where the winter of 1853–54 promised to be more brilliant than any which had preceded it.

Knowing that the luxury of the rich supplies work for the poor, and hence improves their condition, Napoleon encouraged lavish expenditure on the part of others, and was very free with his own money too. He also directed Eugénie to spend her large allowance to the last penny; but while she bestowed considerable sums in charity, and spent freely upon her toilet, she was no spendthrift, and never exceeded her income, her accounts always balancing with the most praiseworthy accuracy. The Empress, who dispensed charity charmingly, and who was most generous to her friends, is said, though, never to have thought of scattering around her trifling gifts of

no great intrinsic value, which become priceless merely because bestowed at the right time and place with a graceful word or gesture. This art, in which Josephine excelled, was beneath, or beyond Eugénie, who, therefore, in time, earned a reputation for niggardliness which she in nowise deserved. She is thus said to have lost unconsciously a fine opportunity to win the affections of the people around her, which she would, however, have been willing to pay a far higher price to obtain.

The war, which had been looming up in the eastern horizon for several months, was finally declared in February, 1854, England, France, and Turkey joining forces to oppose Russia. England supplied ships, France gave money and men, and the Crimean War began gaily, the Allies fully expecting it would be over before long. But the seat of war being so remote from the capital, society did not for a moment suspend its gaieties, in which both Emperor and Empress took their full share, for Napoleon had found that he must remain in Paris to keep a firm hand on the governmental helm, although he would have preferred to share the dangers and glories of the French troops in the East. In spite of the distance, however, he occasionally tried to direct the movements of his army, commanded in turn by Generals Arnault, Canrobert, and Pélissier, who found climate and cholera even worse foes to encounter than the Russians, who, nevertheless, fought like heroes.

After seeing his soldiers embark on the English transports at Calais, the Emperor escorted Eugénie to Biarritz, — a picturesque bathing resort on the Bay of Biscay, — and leaving her there to enjoy the sea-bathing, took a journey through Southern France. He returned to Biarritz only in time to spend his official birthday with his wife. Napoleon Day was, as usual, the signal for

toasts and rejoicings in all parts of the Empire, as well as in the French army in the Crimea. The Prefect of Paris gave a fine banquet at the Hôtel de Ville, where, after toasting the Emperor, he gave utterance to the national wish, by saying: —

"To her Majesty the Empress Eugénie. — May God bless the Emperor in his dearest affections! May his august helpmate, who feels for the poor and suffering children of our cities all the cares of maternity, soon know all its joys."

France was indeed eagerly awaiting an heir to the throne; but while vague rumours had been rife from time to time that the Empress was in an interesting condition, all had proved quite unreliable, and people were already beginning to wonder whether the Empress might not remain childless, like Josephine, and thus forfeit her right to remain on the throne. It is said that this question troubled Eugénie also at times, for she knew how important it was that Napoleon should have an heir, so as to make his succession safe in the eyes of the people. Her health having suffered from the winter gaieties, Eugénie lingered a few days longer at Biarritz, while Napoleon went to Boulogne to receive visits from Leopold, King of Belgium, from the King of Portugal, and from Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria. The last-named guest formally invited the French sovreigns to visit the Queen of England, for the two nations were now on a friendly footing, and allies instead of foes, as had been the case during so many years.

Meantime French and English, fighting side by side at Sebastopol, fancied it would be an easy task to become masters of this city; but instead of carrying it by assault in a few days, they had to lay siege to it month after month. During this war their forces were

fearfully decimated by heat, cold, and disease, as well as by the deadly fire in the battles of Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann. The latter engagement, being considered a French victory, was celebrated in France with great rejoicings. Indeed, the Parisians caught the military fever so violently, that they thronged to witness the review of the new corps of Imperial Body Guards, whose tall stature, glittering uniforms, admirable discipline, and great bravery, were equally effective in court pageants and times of danger.

Before the end of the year 1854, the Russian Emperor died of pneumonia, and his brother, succeeding him upon the throne, determined to end the war as speedily as possible. Meantime, Napoleon had been very anxious to draw as near the front as possible, and, as the Empress was determined to accompany him, the Sultan of Turkey began to make extensive preparations at Constantinople for the reception of these august guests. This journey was, however, viewed with great disfavour by all the Emperor's staunchest supporters, who frankly told him that there might be no trouble in Paris as long as everything went on well; but that the turbulent element in the capital would surely rise up at the first hint of disaster, were he not on the spot to hold it in check. These remonstrances had already begun to undermine Napoleon's determination, when he set out early in April, 1855, with Eugénie, for the promised visit to Queen Victoria.

On landing in England, the Imperial couple were met by the Prince Consort, who escorted them to Windsor. Their trip thither was one long ovation, all the English having turned out to gaze upon the man who had lived as an exile among them, and the woman who owed her position to her beauty and grace. The Queen received

them at the foot of the staircase at Windsor, where she greeted them cordially, although, as she remarked in her diary, it seemed strange thus to welcome the nephew of England's greatest foe. Victoria was charmed by both her guests, who proved so congenial, that that visit laid the foundations for a lasting friendship which was in years to come to prove such a boon to Eugénie.

Wishing to produce a good impression upon her royal hostess, Eugénie had carefully designated all the gowns she intended to wear during her visit. By some mischance, however, her luggage was delayed, and when she retired to dress for dinner, she found herself without a single suitable gown. In her distress, she called the Emperor into consultation, and had almost decided to accept his first suggestion, — pretend a headache and go to bed, — when he suddenly advised her to borrow a gown from one of her ladies, and appear in that. Clad in a blue silk robe, hastily altered to suit her figure, devoid of all ornaments save a few natural flowers in her glossy hair, Eugénie, nevertheless, appeared so lovely that she created a sensation at the English court. Queen Victoria, writing in her diary, says: "She is full of courage and spirit, and yet so gentle, with such innocence and *enjouement* that the *ensemble* is charming. With her great liveliness, she has the prettiest and most modest manners."

On the morrow the Imperial couple enjoyed a long drive with their hostess, and in the evening attended a grand ball in the Waterloo Gallery, where Eugénie — now in all her Imperial splendour of attire — danced with the Prince Consort, while Victoria opened the ball with Napoleon III.

The next day a state council was held at Windsor, and there the Prince Consort and English statesmen



concurred with Napoleon's friends in begging him to relinquish his plan of visiting the Crimea, and remain at home to secure peace and order in Western Europe. After this council was over, Napoleon III. was led to St. George's Chapel, where the Queen solemnly bestowed upon him the Order of the Garter, an honour which he acknowledged in a well-turned English speech. This reception in England, where he was now an honoured guest, was doubly gratifying to him, because he so clearly remembered the years spent there in obscurity and comparative poverty. The visit was equally pleasant to Eugénie, because she felt flattered to have won the friendship of the woman whose virtues she admired, and whom she knew at the same time to be the most respected and influential sovereign of her time.

The two ladies proved so congenial that the Imperial visit seemed all too brief, and Eugénie was glad to have Victoria accompany them back to London, where the Lord Mayor gave a sumptuous banquet to the Imperial guests at Guildhall. While in London, their Majesties attended the opera, and visited the Crystal Palace, which had so charmed Napoleon that he had arranged to have an exposition in Paris, and he now formally invited Queen Victoria and Prince Albert to come there and see it.

The visit ended, Napoleon and Eugénie returned to Paris, whence they wrote cordial letters to the Queen and Prince Consort, thanking them heartily for the pleasure they had enjoyed, rejoicing over the bonds of friendship which now united the two thrones, and joyfully anticipating a new meeting next year.

Only a few days after their return, Eugénie was greatly frightened, for the Emperor, riding out one day to join her in the park, was suddenly attacked by an



assassin, whose shots fortunately missed aim. Napoleon, as calm and impassive as usual, showed no signs of trepidation when the man attacked him, and rode on apparently unmoved, through a cheering crowd. But Eugénie could not restrain her tears, when the riders spontaneously formed a body-guard for her husband, giving him an ovation which showed how well they then loved him. On reaching the Tuileries, the Imperial couple found that the news of the attempt, and of Napoleon's almost miraculous escape, had preceded them, for their family and household were already assembled to present hearty congratulations. Besides, that evening the Emperor and Empress attended the opera, where the audience actually stopped the performance to give them a special ovation, and when they left the building, they discovered that the people — wishing to testify their satisfaction — were giving them an impromptu illumination.

The next day, Napoleon and Eugénie drove together to Notre Dame, where a solemn Te Deum was sung in gratitude for the Emperor's escape from the assassin's bullets. But this attempt, together with the advice received from his friends at home and abroad, made Napoleon perceive that it would be best to relinquish his cherished project of visiting the Crimea, and helped him turn all his energies to governing his Empire and assuring the success of the Exposition of 1855. This was to be held in the Palais d'Industrie, built in the Champs Élysées for that express purpose, — a building which was used for more than forty years for exhibitions of all kinds. Napoleon also began the negotiations which ultimately ended the Crimean War, in which France won glory and honour, but only at the cost of many lives and untold suffering.

The First Exposition in Paris was officially opened by

the Emperor and Empress on the 15th of May, 1855. It attracted many strangers to the capital, and as long as it lasted Napoleon and Eugénie entertained one distinguished guest after another, for princes and dignitaries came from all parts of the world to behold it. The King of Portugal with his brother was their first royal guest, and when his visit was over, the Empress journeyed incognita to Eaux Bonnes in the Pyrenees, where the physicians ordered her for her health. In spite of precautions, a person of such striking appearance could not help being recognised wherever she went; but although the people considerately refrained from giving her formal receptions, crowds assembled to see her pass, and she was enthusiastically cheered whenever she appeared in public.

The Emperor, who had been detained in the capital by his manifold duties, joined her only for a few days at Biarritz, and escorted her back to Paris, where they celebrated Napoleon Day together, before receiving the long promised visit of their English guests. Napoleon III. met Queen Victoria at Boulogne, and bidding her a cordial welcome, escorted her by train to Paris, where a grand reception awaited her. Queen Victoria, the Prince Consort, their two eldest children and attendants, then drove with the Emperor along the gaily decorated and brilliantly illuminated streets, amid the cheers of the delighted Parisians, who had not seen any but exiled English sovereigns in nearly four hundred years. Thus they passed along the Boulevards to the Place de la Concorde, all along the Champs Élysées, under the great Arch, and through the Bois de Boulogne to St. Cloud, where the Empress awaited their coming.

This drive through Paris, amid music, cheers, and dazzling lights, the torchlight procession through the



Bois, and the formal reception at St. Cloud, where Imperial guardsmen stood like statues on either end of each step on the grand staircase, made the visit appear more like a trip to fairy-land than anything real. And the Empress, in diaphanous robes and flashing jewels, certainly looked more like a fairy Queen than like a mortal woman, thus completing the charming delusion. The whole court had assembled in honour of the royal guests, who were escorted to their apartments by Napoleon, Eugénie, Prince Napoleon, and Princess Mathilde. When the travellers had donned their state apparel, they were conducted to the famous Apollo Gallery, where the court dignitaries were duly presented. This formality over, they took their seats in the banquet hall, where an elaborate repast was served with such perfection and despatch that the Queen commented upon it afterwards in her diary.

The next day being Sunday, Queen Victoria and her family attended private religious services in their own rooms, and spent the remainder of the day strolling with their hosts through the matchless park, where they admired the grand old forest trees, the velvety turf dotted with beautiful statues, and viewed with rapture the fantastic play of the fountains, whose cool spray seemed particularly grateful on a warm August afternoon. The next morning the Emperor drove his guests to the Exposition, leaving the Empress at home; for she was not strong enough at that time to endure the fatigue of sightseeing, and the Emperor feared she might faint in a crowded place. As is generally the case in Paris, the art-exhibition proved the greatest attraction, and Napoleon, perceiving the Prince Consort's admiration for one of Meissonier's pictures, secretly purchased it, and presented it to his guest as a souvenir of his visit. After



thus spending a few hours at the Exposition, Napoleon drove his guests to the Palais de Justice and the Sainte Chapelle, pausing on the way thither to point out the Conciergerie, where he had been imprisoned in 1840.

The next day, Napoleon and Eugénie took their guests to Versailles, where they visited the castle, saw the fountains play, strolled through the grounds, and examined the Trianons, so inextricably linked with the memory of Marie Antoinette. The day closed with a gala performance at the opera, in honour of the English Queen, who, as well as her husband, was no mean judge of the best music rendered by the greatest artists of the day. They were particularly pleased, however, when the programme concluded with the English national anthem, all the audience uniting in the strain with the most flattering enthusiasm. On the morrow, the royal visitors viewed the industrial part of the Exposition, and drove incognito to the principal points of interest in the great capital, leaving the inspection of the art treasures in the Louvre until the next day, when they also attended the great ball given in their honour by the city of Paris.

It had already been rumoured that the Empress — who now avoided all unnecessary fatigue — had had the famous diamond girdle enlarged; but owing to the hoop-skirts which, it is said, she had recently introduced, no one could detect any change in her appearance, when she entered the ball-room, leaning upon the Prince Consort's arm, and closely following her husband and Queen Victoria. She took no part in the dancing, however, but quietly looked on, while the Emperor danced with the Queen, and Prince Albert selected Princess Mathilde as his partner. Still, when they proceeded to examine the interesting old building, with its fund of historical rem-



iniscences, Eugénie gladly joined them, for she was well informed, and took a lively interest in France's past.

The next day was marked by a grand review on the Champ de Mars, and a visit to the Invalides, where Victoria was deeply impressed by her first sight of Napoleon's tomb, and expressed her satisfaction that the prolonged feud between France and England had finally ceased. A dinner at the Tuileries and a play finished that day, the morrow being devoted to the inspection of St. Germain, Malmaison, and the Fort on Mt. Valérien, and closing with a grand ball in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

The Empress, who had gone thither early in the day, so as to rest and dress, received her royal guests at the head of the famous staircase, and her white robes, trimmed with green, and flashing diamonds, made her such a vision of loveliness, that even her husband could not refrain from exclaiming aloud: "How beautiful you are!"

This breach of proprieties delighted Victoria, who had, meantime, spent several quiet hours with Eugénie, and, learning to know her more intimately, admired her more and more. These two women, so isolated by their exalted positions, felt drawn so closely together, that after that visit they corresponded frequently, thus keeping up the friendship which was to unite them for many a year, and which many trials only strengthened. The ball in the brilliantly illuminated hall, where the huge mirrors reflected the jewels and lights, as well as the magnificent fireworks given in the grounds, is described as one of the most brilliant scenes the old palace ever witnessed. It produced so deep an impression on those who beheld it, that its remembrance still lingers in their memories like a vision of enchantment, and the young Princess Royal, then about fifteen, is said to have been more than



QUEEN VICTORIA AT THE TUILERIES, 1855.
Pauquet.





delighted to dance in that beautiful hall with the Emperor of the French for a partner.

Queen Victoria, having confided to Napoleon her affection for Queen Marie Amélie, — whom she was then harbouring in her realm, — he drove her the next day to the St. Ferdinand Chapel, erected on the spot where the young Duke of Orleans had been thrown from his carriage and killed. There the Emperor bought the Queen one of the Orleanist medals as a souvenir. Victoria accepted it wonderingly, but she little suspected that the Imperial couple, who were now entertaining her so sumptuously, would once be driven out of France too, and come to England to claim her kindly protection.

The visit ended, Eugénie parted regretfully with her friends, giving them pretty souvenirs of their visit, together with fresh flowers from her own garden, and watched them drive away with her husband, who escorted them back to their yacht. There he bade them farewell, but only after many promises had been exchanged to meet again before very long.

Sebastopol having fallen at last, after a heroic defence, the Parisians celebrated the surrender with grand rejoicings, for they foresaw that it would hasten the conclusion of the Crimean War. Soon after this demonstration, the Emperor visited the Exposition in state to distribute the medals, the Empress and court being present in gala attire to lend the ceremony due importance. But although the awards were made, the Exposition did not close, and it was soon after visited by Victor Emmanuel, — then King of Sardinia, — who came to Paris with his two principal advisers, Nigra and Cavour. These guests were entertained almost as sumptuously as Queen Victoria, a grand hunt at St. Germain replacing the ball at

Versailles, as no ladies formed part of the regal party. These guests were, however, bound for England, so their visit took place in two divisions, part of the festivities occurring only on the way home.

The greatest pageant that fall was the welcome home of the Crimean troops, which the Emperor reviewed on the Champ de Mars, while Eugénie witnessed the picturesque sight from the windows of the Ministry building. She now seemed in excellent health and spirits, and although none of the vague rumours concerning her had as yet been officially confirmed, the fact that she took part in very few gaieties, and that her mother had come to spend the winter with her, seemed to substantiate the hope that she was now with child.

Early in the new year — 1856 — the Emperor received the assurance that the Crimean War was definitely over, and during the months of February and March welcomed the plenipotentiaries of the different powers who assembled in Paris to sign the treaty.

The announcement made, early in the spring, by the Archbishop of Paris, that the nation's prayers were requested for the Empress, who expected soon to give birth to the longed-for heir, caused a joyful sensation throughout the country. Provision was immediately made that bells should ring when the decisive moment drew near, and that the sex of the new-born child should be proclaimed by twenty-one or one hundred and one guns, the greater number being, of course, used to designate an heir to the French throne.

Labour having begun early in the morning on March 15th, the courtiers hastily assembled in the Tuileries, to remain there, in a state of feverish suspense, until all was over. As in the case of Marie Louise, there were complications and delays, the expected Prince Imperial com-



ing into the world only at three o'clock in the morning of the 16th of March, 1856. The Emperor, the Countess de Montijo, and three court ladies, with the physicians and nurses, were the only persons allowed in the Empress' room, until Napoleon himself summoned Prince Napoleon and Prince Lucien — the next of kin — to witness the birth of the Imperial heir and testify to his legitimacy. As is always the custom, the Minister of State and Keeper of Seals, who were also witnesses, next drew up a paper, which the princes signed, thus refuting the malicious rumour which one of them started a little later, alleging that the heir was a mere foundling, surreptitiously smuggled into the Empress' apartment in a warming pan.

At six o'clock in the morning, the ringing of bells and the booming of one hundred and one guns proclaimed the joyful advent of an heir, whom the Parisians received with as lively demonstrations of joy as any child yet born in the Tuileries. It had been arranged that the Pope and the Queen of Sweden — a granddaughter of Josephine — should be sponsors to Napoleon Eugene Louis Jean Joseph, who was privately baptised in the Tuileries chapel, immediately after Mass, on Palm Sunday, the priest praying aloud: —

"Good God, watch over this cradle, the resting-place of so many hopes. Train Thou the son of the Emperor so that he may form the happiness of this great nation. Grant him his father's magnanimity, and his mother's kindness and inexhaustible charity. To express all our wishes in one word, vouchsafe to him, O Lord, a heart worthy of his destiny and of his name."

Those who were present at this impressive ceremony on the Prince's birthday, treasured the palms they received as souvenirs of the baptism of the Prince Imperial, while the people showed their joy by illuminating the

whole city with a magnificence which had not yet been equalled. The public joy was further heightened by the announcement that the Emperor and Empress would be sponsors to all the children born in wedlock on that day, within the limits of their Empire, and by the distribution of largesses to the poor and donations to charitable institutions, together with the pardon of many political offenders. Besides, the "Figaro" was allowed to resume publication, — although that paper had been suspended for infringement of press laws, — thanks to the witty idea of the editor, who addressed an humble petition to the new-born babe.

The Prince Imperial received no less than twenty-eight orders in his cradle; congratulatory poems rained down upon the Tuileries from all sides, and the Emperor received the felicitations of one official body after another. One of the many flattering addresses made on this joyful occasion he answered as follows: —

"The Senate has shared my joy on hearing that Heaven has given me a son, and you have hailed as a happy event the birth of a Child of France. I use this expression purposely. The Emperor Napoleon, my uncle, who welded into the new system all that was great and good in the old, revived this ancient designation of Children of France. And truly, gentlemen, when an heir is born to perpetuate a national system, that child is not only the offspring of a family, but he is also the son of the whole country, and this name will serve to remind him of his duties. If this was true under the monarchy, which represented more exclusively the privileged classes, how much more so is it now, when the sovereign is the elect of the nation, the first citizen of the country, and the representative of the interests of the people.



Eugénie

"The unanimous acclamations which surround his cradle do not prevent my reflecting over the destiny of those who came into the world in the same place and under analogous circumstances. If I venture to hope that his fate will be more happy, it is because, trusting in Providence, I cannot doubt its protection, when I see it raise up again, by a series of extraordinary circumstances, all it deigned to erect forty years ago, as if it wished to ennoble by martyrdom and misfortune the new dynasty which rose from the ranks of the people. Then, too, history has its lessons, which I shall ever bear in mind. It teaches us on the one hand never to abuse the favours of fortune, on the other that a dynasty has no chance of stability unless it remains true to its origin, and busies itself exclusively with the popular interests for whose benefit it was created. This child, who is consecrated in his cradle by the peace which is just being concluded, by the blessing of the Pope, — borne hither by electricity an hour after his birth, — by the acclamations of the people whom the Emperor loved so dearly, this child, I say, will be worthy, I trust, of the destinies awaiting him."

The Emperor was very happy to have a son, and wishing to give equal cause for rejoicing to his army, invited his faithful generals, Canrobert and Bosquet, to dinner at the Tuileries, and there surprised them both by toasting them Marshals of France.

The Empress, whose ambitions were satisfied, now that she had given France its expected heir, felt besides that her own position was more secure, for being the mother of Napoleon's only son, she would naturally be appointed Regent should the child be called to the throne during his minority. Still, she gave this welcome heir to France only at the cost of some of her exuberant



health, for she was never as strong as before, and could no longer endure the same amount of fatigue. But as she was a devoted mother, she never regretted her lost strength, and showed her gratitude to Providence by many charitable works, in which she took even a livelier interest than before.

When she learned that the whole nation wished to show its affection for the Prince by some suitable gift, she suggested that subscription lists be opened, the maximum amount each person was allowed to contribute being equivalent to five cents. But even so, the amount collected made a large fund which the Empress devoted to the maintenance of day-nurseries and orphan-asylums, where the children of the poor could be well cared for, and which she personally inspected from time to time throughout the remainder of her reign. This work greatly increased Eugénie's popularity, for the French are, as a nation, great child-lovers, and the fact that the Empress's own happiness made her think even more than before of the unhappy poor, pleased all classes. The people, therefore, greeted her more cordially than ever when she again appeared in public, for her youth and beauty, added to the spice of romance of her courtship and the recent halo of maternity, touched all hearts.

In those days Eugénie seemed very happy, for the present was full of interest, the future seemed rich in promise, and the clouds which were to darken her coming years had not yet appeared within her range of vision. She recovered sufficiently rapidly from her hard confinement to stand the churching ceremony without fatigue, and to take a lively interest in the completion of the Peace Treaty, which the plenipotentiaries signed with a quill taken from an eagle in the Jardin des Plantes. This joyful event occurring so soon after the

birth of the Prince Imperial, the members of the Peace Congress enjoyed many of the festivities given in his honour, including the great banquet at the City Hall.

This entertainment was particularly magnificent, the city having spent fifty thousand francs upon the floral decorations only, and having arranged for the Empress' gratification a series of beautiful pictures representing her birthplace and the scenes where she had spent her childhood and girlhood. The Elysée, Compiègne, and Fontainebleau, — so intimately connected with her courtship and marriage, — next appeared, and the panorama closed with a fine view of the Tuileries, where her son had just come into the world, and where he was even then sleeping so peacefully in the Imperial nursery. The embassies also gave sumptuous entertainments in honour of the Peace Treaty, and all the members of the Congress were invited to the state banquet at the Tuileries, where the Imperial couple sat side by side, and presided with their usual ease and happy tact. After entertaining the King of Würtemberg and his suite, the Emperor removed his family and court to St. Cloud, for he wished his son to have all the benefit of the pure air and the fine shade which the park afforded.

The spring of 1856, which proved so gay in the capital, was, however, very desolate in the Rhône and Loire valleys, owing to extensive inundations, which in a few hours swept away the work of years, and entailed great suffering on the people, besides the loss of property and life. The news of these calamities no sooner reached Napoleon, than he hastened to the scene of the disaster, to make sure every possible assistance was given to the sufferers, and that no measures of safety or relief were neglected. Not only did the Emperor make great personal exertions, and distribute private

alms, but he also appropriated one-half the sum voted for the Prince Imperial's christening feast for the use of the sufferers. His presence on the scene of disaster proved very inspiring to the officials, and his gifts and sympathy so touched the hearts of the people, that they long remembered this deed and showed much gratitude and loyal devotion.

On the 14th of June, the Prince Imperial was taken in state to Notre Dame, where four thousand privileged guests were to see him christened. The streets of the capital were crowded with people eager to view the pageant, which greatly resembled the Emperor's marriage, save that the baby Prince now occupied the famous glass coach, while his proud parents followed in the more modest conveyance used for the coronation of Charles X. The people, who had not yet had a glimpse of the Prince, whom they affectionately called "Loulou," gazed eagerly at him and cheered him madly. The babe was brought into the cathedral by his governess and nurse, and after the water had been dashed over his brow, the Emperor himself held him aloft to show him to the cheering spectators. The child then left the cathedral with his attendants, his parents remaining to attend the grand Te Deum which concluded the religious ceremonies, before they went to the banquet at the Hôtel de Ville.

The next day, being Sunday, was devoted to popular rejoicings, the theatres all giving free representations, which were attended by throngs of people. Besides, no less than three hundred balloons rose from various points in the city, scattering broadcast great quantities of sugared almonds, — the usual accompaniment of a French christening feast, — while large supplies of these sweets were freely distributed among the children in the public

schools. Commemorative medals were also scattered by handfuls by numerous heralds, who rode all through the city, and the celebration closed with illuminations and fireworks which made the day memorable to all who beheld them.

On Monday, there was a grand ball at the City Hall, attended by thousands of guests, and on the following Thursday, in the Chapel of St. Cloud, Eugénie officially received the Pope's christening gifts. They consisted of one of the famous papal golden roses for her (a golden rose, on a golden rosebush, apparently growing in a golden vase, which rested on a beautiful pedestal of lapis-lazuli), a picture in choice mosaic for the Emperor, and a relic of the sacred manger for the baby Prince.

Never very robust, the Emperor had contracted rheumatism during his six years' imprisonment in the damp fortress of Ham, and as it now troubled him more than usual, his physicians sent him to spend the month of July at Plombières. The Empress, meantime, remained at St. Cloud with her son, the Emperor writing frequent and affectionate letters to her, and proving as anxious as any young father absent from home for the first time. In one of these letters he says: —

"You and the little one are everything to me. . . . I hail with delight the moment when I shall see you again, as well as our child, and I am rejoicing so over this prospect, that I keep dreading lest in the mean time you or he should fall ill. Don't let any one take him near the pond during his airings. Don't overtire yourself either. All these recommendations may be silly, but when I am happy, I can't help being apprehensive."

Although he wrote thus tenderly to the wife he undoubtedly loved, Napoleon, whose life was far from blameless before his marriage, and who was probably ex-



posed to greater temptations than any other man of his time, did not long remain strictly faithful to Eugénie. A vein of weak sentimentality in his composition made him particularly prone to succumb to temptations, and although he tried to keep his delinquencies from his wife, there were too many persons around him, who, through mistaken zeal, or mean delight in the suffering of others, revealed to Eugénie all that was going on. Truthful and spirited, the Empress rightly considered such lapses of morality a disgrace, and, as she was extremely frank and fearless, she denounced them in no measured terms.

Napoleon, deficient in moral sense, like most of his race before him, instead of reforming, merely tried to carry on his intrigues with greater circumspection, and seemed greatly hurt when his wife refused to close her eyes and ears, let him do just as he chose, and be pleased with any attentions he cared to show her. This conduct on the part of her husband, sorely embittered Eugénie's married life, although, at that time, few people suspected this state of affairs, for she had too much dignity to show all she felt, and concealed as well as she could this unhappy state of affairs.

The fact that her life was not as happy as it seemed, and that she was often cut to the heart by her husband's infidelity, drove Eugénie to seek distracting occupations, for she often felt as if she would go mad unless she managed to forget her trials. She, therefore, worked harder than ever in charitable and social affairs, and not finding those sufficient to occupy her active brain, began to take an interest in political matters, from which until then she had rigorously abstained. This move, which her husband greatly encouraged, was, however, later viewed with displeasure by many of the politicians, some of



whom hated to see a woman mixed up in state affairs, while others feared lest their corrupt practices might now be discovered and ruthlessly denounced. For Eugénie was fearlessly frank; she yielded to impulse in the most undiplomatic way, and, while tactful and kind-hearted, would not countenance any species of wrong-doing or fraud. Such rectitude of purpose agreed ill with the essentially corrupt government of the time, for many of her husband's advisers were mere speculators and even more unprincipled than he.

But while Eugénie despised double-dealing and subterfuge, she was fair-minded and generous, and never resented honest contradiction. Even those who had most strenuously opposed her marriage were always cordially received at the Tuileries, where, in time, many of them became her staunch friends. One of the senators, for example, on hearing Napoleon's speech announcing his coming marriage is reported to have said very emphatically: "A fine speech, but I must say I prefer the sauce to fish," thus expressing, at the same time, his approbation of the discourse, and his disapproval of the match. Some time after, when dining at the Tuileries, the Empress, who was sitting near him, ventured to remark, as he helped himself to turbot: "Why, senator, I thought you liked the sauce only and hated fish!" The arch glance accompanying the remark quite reassured the senator, who, bowing gallantly, informed her that "his tastes had changed," for by this time he had discovered what a really superior woman she was.

As soon as the Emperor returned from Plombières, he took his wife and son to Biarritz, where he celebrated the anniversary of the fall of Sebastopol, his wife and son appearing for a moment at the grand banquet, to the

delight of all the officers present. The Imperial family lingered at Biarritz until the 30th of September, and stopping at Bordeaux on their way home, made only a brief sojourn at St. Cloud before going to Compiègne for the fall hunts. This was their first visit to this palace since war had been declared, and as the nation was now at peace, and had even formed an alliance with its former foe, no bad tidings came to mar their brief sojourn there. The distinguished guests forming the three series entertained that fall at Compiègne included statesmen, financiers, military heroes, and men of letters, as well as such musicians as Auber, Meyerbeer, and Verdi, and the famous artist Horace Vernet.

Although the Emperor convened his cabinet there from time to time, politics were otherwise tabooed, and the principal diversion consisted in hunting parties, attended by ladies as well as gentlemen, in torchlight quarries with huntsmen and hounds, and in the plays given in the castle theatre by the best actors from the metropolis. While most of the pretty and distinguished women were present, none could compare with Eugénie, either in the ball-room or the hunting field, for she was as beautiful and as well dressed as ever, and her horsemanship was extremely graceful, as well as daring.

After spending three weeks at Compiègne, their Majesties returned to the Tuileries, where, before the close of the year, they entertained the Prince of Prussia and his friend Bismarck. The latter already had his eyes wide open; he gauged the character of Napoleon pretty accurately, and greatly admired his wife and child; but on the return journey, he is said to have remarked that it was very sad to hear the peasants in the Vosges Mountains still talking German. These guests, who were to prove France's most relentless foes, were entertained with

great splendour, a brilliant review, a hunt at Fontainebleau, a ball at the Tuileries, and a gala performance at the opera, being only a small part of the festivities in their honour.

Early in January, Eugénie held a state reception in the Throne Room in the Tuileries, where many ladies were presented to her. On such occasions all the Imperial household was on duty, and the court ladies had to stand in groups behind their mistress, — a trying ordeal, as they were required to preserve graceful attitudes, which proved quite a task, for they had not even a chair-back upon which to lean or rest a hand from time to time. This state reception was speedily followed by one of the official balls at the Tuileries, which was, as usual, a brilliant pageant. The old palace was all a-glitter with lights, the Imperial Guards, in gala uniform, stood like statues on either side of the great staircase, military men and officials of all kinds appeared in full uniform, wearing all their orders, and the ladies vied with one another in the freshness and elegance of their gowns and in the splendour of their gems. The Empress generally wore the finest crown jewels, and it was she who opened the ball by dancing the first quadrille in the Hall of Marshals, which, like all the other state apartments, was elegantly decorated with a wealth of palms and of choice flowers.

This fête was the signal for other social diversions, Walewski, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, giving a very successful masked ball which was attended by all the court. The costumes were varied and tasteful, and as every one knew that the Emperor and Empress would be present in disguise, all hoped to recognise them in spite of their masks. The Imperial couple, however, circulated about the rooms in dominoes during the first part

of the evening without being discovered. Then, wishing to mystify the people still further, the Empress cleverly escaped, changed her costume, and, reappearing soon after as a gipsy, began to tell the guests' fortunes. She was nevertheless recognised by Imbert de St. Amand, the faithful and voluminous chronicler of the lives of many of the French Queens, and he gracefully assured her that, even under a mask, she still bore the sceptre of beauty, not to mention any other, less potent over the hearts of men.

Early that spring, their Majesties entertained the Grand Duke Constantine, proudly showing him the wonders of the French capital, which was daily becoming more beautiful under the Emperor's directions. Baron Haussmann, who had charge of this work, opened broad thoroughfares, made parks, planted trees, built fountains, and laboured so energetically that he completely transformed the capital, while retaining most of its historical buildings and all its former attractive features.

All these improvements were carried out by order of Napoleon III., who longed to give light and air to the densely populated quarters of the city. He also insisted upon planting flowers in the squares, although his advisers declared it would be folly to do so, as the people would immediately destroy them all. The Emperor persisted, and was simply triumphant when he proved that the people enjoyed and appreciated his efforts in their behalf, and were quite content merely to admire the blossoms planted for their delectation. During a brief sojourn at Fontainebleau, where the Emperor entertained his Russian guest by a grand hunt, Eugénie inspected all the charitable institutions of the town, pleasing every one by her graceful kindliness, and by the genuine sympathy which she felt for all such undertakings. In the eve-

ning, she took her guest out on the balcony, to witness the torchlight muster of huntsmen, game, and hounds, and on the morrow drove with him and her husband all through the picturesque old forest.

It was at Fontainebleau also that they received their next royal guest, Maximilian of Bavaria, who enjoyed the hunts and drives too, and in whose honour the castle was illuminated and superb fireworks given. The Imperial couple next escorted their august guest to the capital, where he spent a week in a dazzling round of reviews, banquets, balls, and entertainments of all kinds, not to mention gala performances at the theatre and opera.

All the sovereigns had been charmed with their reception in Paris, but as the Emperor could not possibly return these distinguished visits in person, he deputed his cousin, Prince Napoleon, to represent him at the Prussian, Bavarian, and Saxon courts. While the Prince was acquitting himself of this duty, their Majesties removed to St. Cloud, whence they started early in August to visit Queen Victoria at Osborne Castle, in the Isle of Wight. As the reigning families could now meet on the familiar footing of old friends, this sojourn proved most agreeable. Besides, the two courts seized this opportunity to settle several political questions in an amicable way, thus strengthening the bond of friendship between both nations, as well as between the two families. A few days after the departure of these guests, Victoria set out on a yachting expedition, in the course of which she and her family landed in France, thus making, as she playfully wrote to Napoleon, "a peaceful invasion of Normandy." No official notice of this visit having been given, no formal receptions were tendered, but the Queen and her family greatly appreciated this

absence of all pomp, and particularly enjoyed journeying from place to place like ordinary tourists.

Meantime, their Imperial Majesties had returned home to preside over the formal opening of the new Louvre, now joined to the Tuileries, and thus forming but one vast building. This work, which had long been planned, was begun in 1852, and had only just been completed. The various pavilions were richly decorated by the principal artists of the day, who were, therefore, present when the Emperor inaugurated this magnificent building, and received from his hand their well-earned decorations.

Napoleon also invited all the workmen to a magnificent banquet, which was served in the palace they had helped to erect, and graced by the Imperial couple, who acted as hosts. So that none of the labourers should have cause to regret a whole day spent in idleness and feasting, Napoleon ordered that their wages should be paid in full that day, although no stroke of work was done. He also made a very happy speech at the end of the banquet, and he and Eugénie showed particular interest in the only woman present. They then learned that she was the widow of a stone-cutter, and that she had worked bravely to finish her husband's contract, thereby earning enough to feed her penniless children.

The Emperor's kindly attitude toward all the Paris workmen greatly increased his popularity, as was shown by the volume and fervour of the cheers which greeted him on the morrow, when he appeared in public to celebrate "Napoleon Day," as usual. Soon after, his wife and son set out for Biarritz, while he inspected the camp at Châlons, and made a brief journey to Stuttgart, where he met many of the distinguished persons he had entertained at various times in the Tuileries. This diplomatic

visit over, he hastened to Biarritz, whence he made several short excursions, for he took a lively interest in agriculture, and had purchased vast stretches of waste lands in various parts of the country, to show the people what drainage, irrigation, and intelligent cultivation could do for the redemption of barren soil. These model farms proved invaluable object-lessons to French farmers, who were particularly slow to adopt new methods, and so conservative, that they would never have consented to make use of modern agricultural implements and ideas, had they not beheld these practical demonstrations of their worth.

The Empress adopted Biarritz as her favourite summer resort, not only because she enjoyed the view from Villa Eugénia, and delighted in sea bathing and yachting, but also because it was so near Spain. She could thus make frequent excursions into her native land, and at Biarritz met many Spaniards with whom she liked to converse in her mother tongue.

During this sojourn, Eugénie made an excursion over the border to St. Sebastian, where the Spanish authorities gave her a charming and characteristic reception, which she greatly enjoyed. This was the most exciting event during her stay at the seashore, where the little Prince grew brown and rosy, and was much admired as he played for the first time in the sand. Soon after her return home, Eugénie went with the Emperor to Châlons, making use of the magnificent, new train of cars presented to the government by the railroad company. This consisted of eleven carriages, connected by a species of vestibule, — a great novelty in those days, — and comprised sleeping, dining, and drawing-room cars, all decorated with great taste and skill. The Empress was not, however, as sumptuously lodged at Châlons, where accommodations were improvised; but

she merrily adapted herself to camp life, and greatly enjoyed seeing the various military manœuvres.

After another brief sojourn at St. Cloud, the Imperial family removed to Compiègne to entertain five series of distinguished guests. One of the ladies visiting there makes the following mention of the baby Prince, who was now an attractive child of about a year and a half: "The little Prince is perfectly healthy, and as intelligent and nice as can be. I am very glad to see how little the Empress spoils him. When he falls, he has to pick himself up, and he has already been taught not to cry. Moreover, he is obedient. The Emperor would be more inclined to indulge him. He is an amiable child, always merry and good-humoured. On his mother's birthday, the officers of both regiments came into the gallery to present their good wishes. The Emperor and Empress went all around the circle, followed by the little Prince in his nurse's arms. He has already been trained to salute military fashion, and to throw kisses. Of course the two styles of greeting get rather jumbled at times, but you can readily imagine that such a state of affairs makes him all the more successful!"

The Compiègne festivities ended, their Majesties enjoyed one day only of unbroken family life before returning to the Tuileries, where the season soon began, and countless demands were made upon the Empress' time and strength. She had spent, on the whole, a pleasant and profitable, although rather uneventful year; but whereas 1857 had been peaceful and quiet, 1858 was to prove far more stirring.

Early in January, their Majesties decided to attend a benefit performance at the opera. This announcement was eagerly welcomed by an Italian, named Orsini, who had come to Paris intending to kill the Emperor, be-

cause he fancied Napoleon faithless to the Carbonari oath he had taken in Italy, and thought that he prevented that country from securing its freedom. The anarchist had several accomplices, who came with him from England; but although the French police had received timely warning, they had, as yet, not managed to lay hands upon any of the suspected persons. Orsini and his three associates were posted near the theatre, armed with bombs which they meant to throw at the Imperial carriage as it drove up under the opera porch. On their way to the scene of this attempt, one of these men was arrested; but the others were all at their post when Napoleon arrived with Eugénie, his carriage surrounded, as usual, by a mounted escort. As had been arranged, two of the men threw their bombs, which, falling between the horses of the first group of guards and those of the coach, exploded with a loud noise. Every gas jet in the street was put out by the concussion, every pane of glass in the neighbourhood broken, and the seventy-six missiles the bombs contained scattered far and wide, killing ten persons and wounding about one hundred and fifty others. Several of the horses were positively torn to pieces, and the Imperial carriage completely riddled with shot.

At the first report, Eugénie bravely threw herself in front of her husband to protect him from further danger, although a fragment of glass had cut her temple. The Emperor's hat was later found perforated like a sieve, but he was quite unharmed, and just as calm as ever. One of the detectives posted near the theatre entrance, sprang forward as the explosion occurred, and tore open the carriage door to rescue their Majesties, whose danger was increased by the kicking and plunging horses. The Emperor, not hearing his excited: "Sire, Madame,

descendez!" and mistaking him in the darkness for one of the assassins, struck out boldly, knocking him down, a feat which the detective later declared reassured him effectively concerning his master's complete safety. Leaving the detective to pick himself up as best he could, the Emperor sprang out of the carriage, lifted Eugénie out, and hurried her right into the theatre-lobby, where, although pale and trembling, she dauntlessly cried: "Come, Louis, let us go out again and show them we are not cowards like them." The Emperor, cooler, although not less brave, refrained, because he knew the police had its hands full enough caring for the wounded, securing the assassins, and restoring order in the street, where the sudden extinction of all the lights greatly added to the horror and confusion.

The Emperor, therefore, contented himself with giving explicit orders that the wounded should receive every care, and despatching an emissary to the Tuileries, to make sure that a similar attempt had not been made to kill the little Prince. Then, knowing their presence might prevent a panic in the crowded theatre when the event became known, he and the Empress entered their box as quietly as if nothing uncommon had happened. When the audience learned, however, that the noise they had mistaken for salvos of artillery had been in reality a dastardly attempt at murder, they gave their Majesties a touching and spontaneous ovation. Eugénie, whose white silk dress was spotted with blood, acknowledged these acclamations as gracefully as usual, but the colour did not return to her cheeks, until she learned that her son was safe, and no attempt had been made on the Tuileries.

The news of the explosion spread far and wide, creating a tremendous sensation, and when the performance was over, and their Majesties again ventured out into the

street, they found an immense crowd stationed all along their passage. The houses on either side were brilliantly illuminated, and they received an ovation which sounded like the roll of thunder to the people anxiously awaiting their coming at the Tuileries. There, too, all the lights were burning brightly, and the big rooms crowded, for, in spite of the advanced hour, all the courtiers and officials had hastened to the palace, to present their heartfelt congratulations upon their Majesties' narrow escape.

It was very late, therefore, before Napoleon and Eugénie could retire, and the Prince's nurse had long been asleep, when she was awakened by the opening of the nursery door, and, starting up, saw the Imperial couple steal on tiptoe to the cradle of their sleeping child. There, they knelt in tears, and kissed the unconscious little sleeper, before they stole away again as noiselessly as they had entered; but although they fancied themselves unseen, this touching episode had made a deep impression on the attendant's heart.

No trace of emotion was visible in either Emperor or Empress the next day, however; and while the police was still busy arresting the assassins, they drove out together unattended, passing all along the Boulevards, and through the most densely populated districts, where the people rewarded them for the confidence they showed by cheering them madly. That day and the next was taken up in receiving deputations and congratulatory addresses, and on the 17th their Majesties were present at the solemn Te Deum, sung in Notre Dame in honour of their almost miraculous preservation. In fact, had not one of the criminals been arrested, and Orsini refrained from casting the last bomb after the lights went out, their Majesties would inevitably have perished, as was clearly demonstrated in the trial which began about a

month after this memorable attempt. Had the Emperor's life alone been endangered, he would gladly have pardoned the assassins; but he could not liberate a criminal whose attempt had cost the lives of many innocent persons, so the trial proceeded without any interference on his part.

Orsini confessed his guilt, was tried and sentenced; but although he attempted to clear his accomplices, they were sentenced too. Before paying the penalty of his crime, however, Orsini wrote to Napoleon, imploring him to interfere in Italy's behalf. This passionate appeal, added to his own convictions, and to a warning received from England that a hundred Italians were pledged to kill him, if he did not help their oppressed country, finally determined Napoleon to undertake the Italian war, in spite of the disapproval he knew he would incur on the part of certain of the European powers.

It took some time, however, to reach this decision, and before his plans were fully matured, May again came around, and the Imperial family removed to Fontainebleau to enjoy the spring in that charming retreat. The Emperor felt a special affection for this palace, where he remembered being christened at the age of three, when Napoleon I. and Marie Louise acted as his sponsors. The forest also had delightful associations for him as well as for Eugénie, for they had ridden through it in the days when the Emperor first began his courtship.

After enjoying a few weeks together in this ideal retreat, the Imperial couple returned to St. Cloud, where the Emperor left his wife and son, while he went to Plombières to undergo treatment for rheumatism. It was at this bathing resort that Napoleon had his famous interview with the Italian statesman Cavour, and arranged with him that Prince Napoleon should marry Princess

Clothilde, Victor Emmanuel's daughter, in exchange for French help in driving the Austrians out of the peninsula, and making Italy free "from the Alps to the Adriatic."

This momentous interview, which was to have such important results, attracted very little attention at the time, the public taking far more interest in a meeting which took place, soon after, at Cherbourg, between Victoria and Napoleon. Both sovereigns went thither accompanied by their consorts, and the Imperial couple not only boarded the English yacht to welcome their guests, but escorted them ashore amid booming cannons, rolling drums, the loud blare of the military bands, and the cheering of the vast crowds assembled to see them.

But coming events were already casting their shadows, and Victoria commented upon the fact that the Emperor seemed embarrassed, while Eugénie was just as modest and charming as ever. This time the visit was very brief, a fact which Napoleon did not regret, for he knew that England would not approve of his coming policy. Still the sovereigns had several pleasant drives together, and Victoria enjoyed reviewing the French troops drawn up in battle array in her honour.

When the royal guests had departed, the Imperial couple inaugurated a new basin, visited sundry vessels of their fleet, and unveiled the statue of Napoleon I., which had recently been erected in the city which he transformed into one of the finest military ports the world has ever seen.

Napoleon and Eugénie next made a journey all through Brittany, which seemed like a triumphal progress, for the people there received them with extravagant demonstrations of joy. Flowers, addresses, and presents of sundry kinds were showered upon them, the Empress receiving

them all with her wonted tact, but showing most pleasure when a little child at Auray gave her a dainty rosary for the baby Prince. Her beauty created a sensation wherever she went, and the wives of the officials thought nothing too good for her, and on one occasion, at least, are said to have made her very uncomfortable by decking her bed with white satin sheets, for they thought nothing else would do for so dainty a creature. The Empress, however, knew how kindly all these attentions were meant, and was, therefore, careful to acknowledge all tokens of love and interest with the graciousness they deserved.

The Imperial tour ended on the 21st of August, when their Majesties returned to St. Cloud, where they found their son in the best of health and spirits. They took him with them on their next journey, which was directed to Biarritz, where they spent the month of September, enjoying the sea baths. Immediately after their return to St. Cloud, Napoleon went to the camp at Châlons, where he inspected his troops and watched them perform their complicated evolutions with great precision and skill. The Empress soon joined him there, and Napoleon welcomed her with a display of all the military pomp at his command, giving a grand review for her especial benefit. They next journeyed together to Rheims, where they spent a few days visiting the quaint old town, and viewing with special interest the famous cathedral where nearly all the French Kings were solemnly anointed before their coronation. And there they remembered that the last ceremony of this kind in the venerable old building had been the consecration of Charles X., who had died in exile, and whose family was still in Austria.

In the beginning of November, the Imperial family went as usual to Compiègne for the hunting season,

which this time extended over five weeks, and proved most enjoyable to all those who made part of the famous series. The Empress was, as usual, the most beautiful among the many handsome women present, and she and her husband were very glad to lay aside much of the formal court etiquette, and to entertain their guests like private parties. The picturesque meets in the forest, where the rich hunting garb of the women, the red coats of the men, the spirited horses, and sleek hounds formed such a pretty picture, was the main diversion, and the Empress herself frequently took an active part in this sport. She seemed as young and rode as well as ever, and greatly enjoyed the exhilaration of her favourite exercise, in which many of the lady guests were glad to indulge in her company.

The party did not break up until the 5th of December, when Napoleon and Eugénie returned to the Tuileries to begin the winter of 1858–59, which was to prove so very eventful. The new year began very quietly, but many suspected that this state of affairs would not long continue, when Napoleon remarked to the Austrian envoy on New Year's Day: "I regret that our relations with your government should no longer be as friendly as in the past; but I beg you to assure the Emperor that my personal feelings are quite unchanged."

The relations were no longer so cordial, simply because Napoleon had determined to help Victor Emmanuel drive the Austrians out of Italy as soon as the marriage between Prince Napoleon and Princess Clothilde was concluded. Although barely fifteen, this Princess was united early in February to Prince Napoleon, who went to Turin to get his bride, and brought her back to Paris in triumph. There they were received with all honour, and although the Princess was not at all pretty,

she was so quiet and dignified, so proud of her noble descent, and so self-possessed, that she played her part very creditably. Eugénie, touched that so young a creature should already be married, — and to so undesirable a husband as Prince Napoleon, — met the bride cordially; but the latter fancied herself far above the Empress, and considered her a mere adventuress, or a parvenue, while treating her with perfect outward politeness. All Eugénie's attempts to win Clothilde's liking were, therefore, unavailing, and many of her kindly speeches were answered with repellent coldness. For instance, the Empress once sympathetically inquired whether she did not find court ceremonials very irksome, whereat the Princess stiffly answered: "No, not at all; but then *I* am so accustomed to them at home."

The Princess was very narrow-minded and bigoted, seldom appeared at court unless circumstances required, spent all her time with her children or in practices of devotion, and always seemed to resent the fact that her husband had once been in love with Eugénie, and had vainly tried to marry her. She was not more hostile to the Empress than her husband, however, whose enmity had ceased to be veiled ever since the birth of the Prince Imperial.

Indeed, the advent of this child proved a bitter disappointment to Prince Napoleon, who hoped to be his cousin's heir and successor. He not only tried to cast a slur upon the Prince's birth, declaring he was a supposititious child, but failing to win credence for that statement, sedulously spread all manner of evil reports concerning the Empress' vanity, extravagance, and lack of dignity, until he finally succeeded in poisoning many minds. Seeing none would believe the story he circulated concerning the Prince's birth, — which was besides

confuted by the fact that he himself was one of the witnesses who testified to his legitimacy, — he next tried to convince people that the Prince was only half-witted, and never mentioned him save as "that poor infant." Of course the appearance of the bright little Prince soon refuted this slanderous assertion also; but the mother naturally resented such rumours, and, as she despised Prince Napoleon on account of his profligate character and cowardice, she did not take much trouble to conceal her opinion of him. Too frank and fearless to dissimulate, she let fly many a shaft, which apparently glanced off Prince Napoleon's armour of polished indifference, but in reality left rankling wounds which he avenged in the basest way.

Meantime, the Empress was present at the solemn assembly of the Legislative Body on February 7th, 1859, and she and the bride, attended by all the court ladies, sat in the gallery to listen to the Emperor's opening address. In this speech Napoleon again hinted at the coming war, but its shadow was not allowed to dim any of the festivities, and all agreed that the capital had never seen so gay a carnival season. Entertainments were so numerous, that many people attended four or five in the course of the same evening, and all were unusually brilliant. But all others paled before the fête which the city offered to the bridal couple, and before four masked balls given by the Minister of State, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Legislature, and the Court. These were all as gay as possible, the costumes surpassing all description, and the interest of the guests being heightened by the fact that their Majesties appeared masked at all save their own ball.

All these worldly gaieties were, however, quickly succeeded by the Lenten austerities, the court giv-

ing no formal entertainments during that season save concerts once a week. Still Eugénie continued to entertain informally on Monday evenings, when two or three hundred guests often dropped in at the Tuileries, to pay their respects to the handsome Empress, whose sprightly conversation many of them greatly enjoyed. It was also during these winter months that the Emperor began his famous "Life of Cæsar," which was to occupy his leisure hours for several years, and proved a very absorbing and congenial occupation to a man of his studious turn of mind.

Early in March, Eugénie went in state to the opera, to view the first public performance of Gounod's "Mignon," an opera which proved a great and lasting success, and which is still one of the popular favourites. Then, during Holy Week, their Majesties also visited the Salon, circulating freely among the other visitors, and greatly admiring Yvon's recently completed "Courtine de Malakoff," which now graces the "Hall of Battles" in Versailles.

On Holy Thursday, the Empress became aware that matters were rapidly reaching a crisis, so her Easter was not wholly untroubled. Still she had to wait and dissemble, until diplomatic machinations brought about the war in which France and Piedmont pitted their forces against Austria. Troops were immediately hurried into Italy by land and by sea, and the Emperor prepared to act as General-in-Chief of his own army. But before leaving France, he appointed Eugénie Regent, with his uncle Jerome Bonaparte as her chief adviser. He also issued a proclamation, wherein he committed his wife and the Prince Imperial to the loyalty of the nation, saying:

"I entrust them both to the valour of the army which remains in France to watch over our frontiers and protect our hearths. I entrust them to the whole nation, which

will, I know, surround them with all the love and devotion of which I daily receive so many proofs."

If the Emperor had full confidence in the people, many of the latter had equally implicit faith in Eugénie, as was proved by a sutler's wife, who, on the eve of going to Italy with her regiment, left her six-year-old daughter with Eugénie's secretary, saying: "I beg Madame the Empress to take charge of my child. I have no fear, for I know that she will take good care of her until I come back."

Eugénie accepted this responsibility, and provided carefully for the little maiden, as the mother had foreseen. She was, however, sorely troubled at the idea of parting from her husband; but, in spite of the affecting farewells uttered during his last evening at the Tuileries, and the addresses on the morrow, she maintained all her dignity and composure, thus setting a good example to other wives, who felt it incumbent upon them to imitate her bravery. At half-past five, the Emperor drove with Eugénie to the railway station, receiving a grand ovation on the way thither, for the people cheered madly all along his route, calling out from time to time: "Rest easy, we will watch over your wife and son till you come home!"

These demonstrations greatly pleased the Emperor, who maintained his customary impassive mien only with the utmost difficulty, and he and Eugénie were busy every step of the way acknowledging these popular demonstrations of ardent loyalty. The Empress boarded the train with her husband, and accompanied him to Montereau, where, after dining with him, she quietly took leave and returned alone to Paris.

The war which opened thus, was to prove brief and glorious, the French winning the five victories of Pales-



tro, Turbigo, Magenta, Mélégnano, and Solférino, but only at the cost of great bloodshed. Throughout this campaign the Emperor directed the movements of his troops with great skill and bravery; but it is said the sight of the Italian battlefields inspired him with such a horror for warfare, that he never again wished to engage in unnecessary conflicts. The news of these successive brilliant victories greatly delighted the nation, and the Parisians especially gave vent to almost delirious bursts of joy.

Meantime, the Empress had earnestly undertaken her new duties as Regent, shirking no task however irksome, driving several times a week to the Tuileries to preside over the council meetings, and amazing the ministers by her zeal, her intelligence, and her aptitude in seizing and comprehending difficult questions. She also addressed the Senate and Legislative Assembly, both of which bodies expressed a lively wish to behold the Prince Imperial before they adjourned. The Empress not only granted this request, but expressed her pleasure in doing so in the following speech: —

"Gentlemen, I am deeply touched by the request you have expressed to see the Prince Imperial before returning to your homes. I rely upon your enlightened patriotism to maintain the national faith in the courage of our own army, and, when the time comes, in the moderation of the Emperor. However difficult my task may be, I feel in my loyal French heart that I shall be able to carry it through. I am encouraged, gentlemen, by your faithful co-operation, and by the support of the people at large, who, during the absence of their ruler, are not likely to fail a woman and a child."

The members of the Senate and Legislative Assembly were all charmed with the little Prince, who, although

seldom produced, behaved very creditably, and they all went home to relate how bright and obedient he was, and how unspoiled, in spite of his exalted station and the fact that he was an only child. The Parisians were also soon to have a chance to behold him, for his mother suddenly decided to take him to Notre Dame with her to hear the grand Te Deum in honour of the battle of Solférino.

Eugénie received the news of this victory one night after she had already retired. She was so pleased, however, that she dressed again hastily, and went down into the garden, to tell the news in person to the officers and sentinels. They, too, were overjoyed, and when the tidings reached the capital, early the next morning, the enthusiasm of the Parisians knew no bounds. The three-year-old Prince Imperial was also greatly excited, when informed that he was to accompany his mother, and he listened very gravely, and promised to be very good, when his governess carefully explained how he must behave. Dressed in white piqué, with a broad blue sash across his breast, the Prince left the Tuileries at eleven o'clock, on the 3rd of July, 1859, and drove in an open carriage with his mother, Princess Clothilde, and Princess Mathilde to the venerable old cathedral. They were escorted by the Imperial Guard in full uniform, troops were stationed along their passage, while the crowds of people cheered with delight, and threw showers of flowers into the carriage. Eugénie bowed and smiled incessantly to acknowledge these favours, and her son threw countless kisses and thoroughly enjoyed all the bustle and noise.

When they reached Notre Dame, they were formally received by the Archbishop, who ceremoniously led them into the church and up to the altar. The

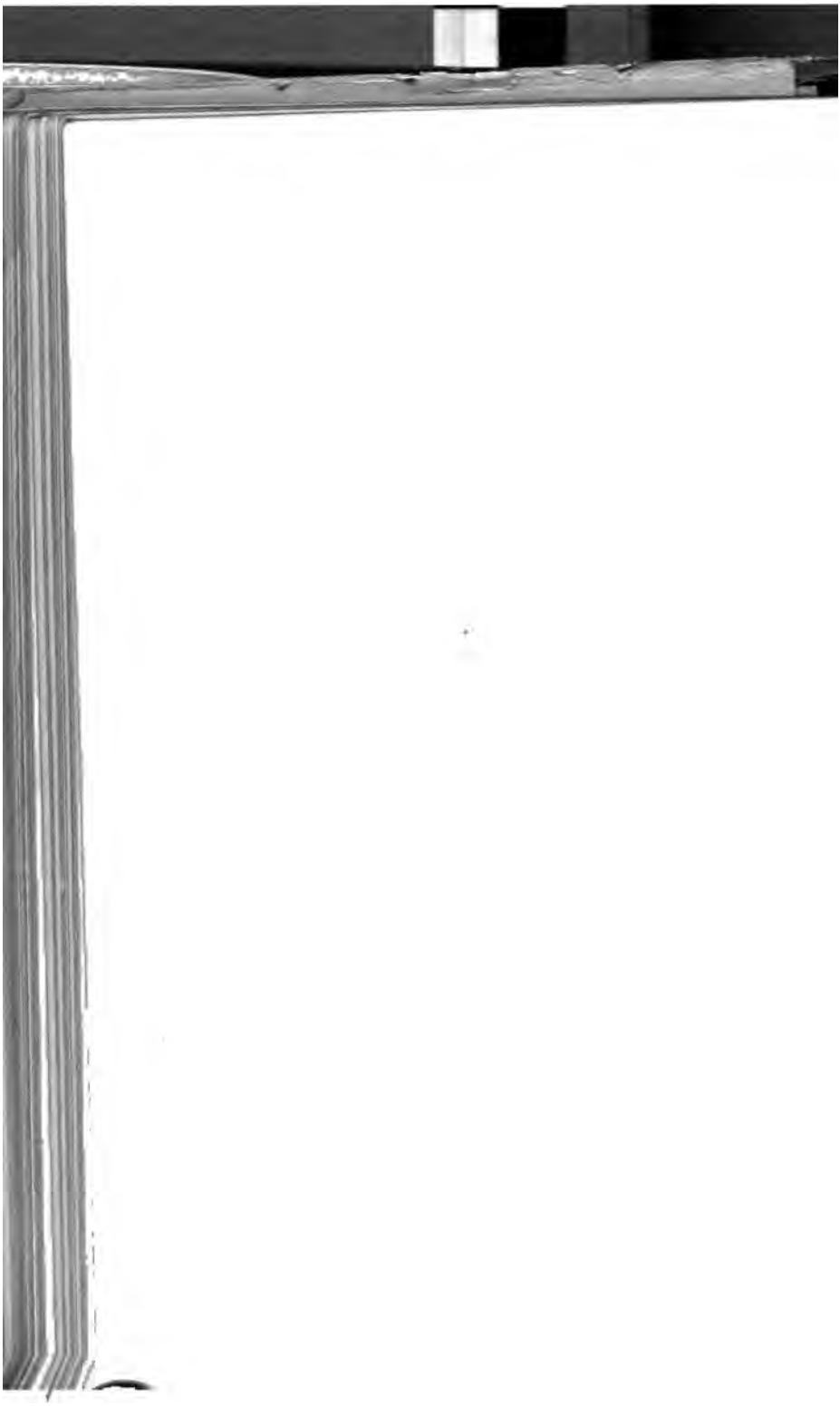
little Prince moved slowly up the broad aisle, holding hi beautiful mother's hand, and sat down beside her on th platform placed in the choir. There, all could see him and the vast audience was equally pleased and touche by the childish gravity of his demeanour. Throughou the long service, — which must have seemed almost end- less to a child of his tender years, — he kept his bi soulful eyes fixed upon Eugénie, and carefully imitated all she did, rising, kneeling, and crossing himself with infantile grace. A child in his position always appeals to every heart, and the people were delighted with the intelligence he so plainly manifested. Besides, "It was the first time that the son of the Emperor mingled officially with the nation," and the people felt doubly happy because "God granted him the boon of doing so under the auspices of victory."

On the way home, the Empress and her son received a second ovation, which so pleased the Prince Imperial that he delighted the court by declaring as he re-entered the palace: "I want another Te Deum!"

It soon became apparent, however, that the pageant would not immediately be repeated, for Napoleon signed an armistice at Villa Franca, and, perceiving the war was virtually over, returned to France two weeks after his son's memorable visit to the cathedral. His wife and boy were waiting for him at the station, and the Prince was quite hurt when his father anxiously inquired whether he still knew his papa. Napoleon was glad to be home, for he was a family man, and very proud of the child's preference for him, — a preference which was partly due to extreme paternal indulgence. For whereas Eugénie was very firm and strict with her son, the Emperor always spoiled him, and would not allow any one to check or correct him in his presence.



THE RETURN OF THE ARMY OF ITALY, 1859.



Napoleon's return was soon followed by that of the troops, who marched in triumph through the capital, wearing their dusty and travel-stained uniforms, but proudly bearing aloft the eagles and flags still blackened by the smoke of battle. The Empress and Prince Imperial were stationed on a balcony of the Place Vendôme, the Emperor being on horseback in the street below them to review the troops of which he was so justly proud. On this occasion the Prince Imperial wore a full uniform, and delighted the soldiers by drawing his tiny sword and saluting them in true military style. He and his mother — who was gowned in white — again received a grand ovation, and were kept very busy answering the manifold cheers and salutes.

Toward the end of the review, the Prince's equerry carried him down into the street, and placed him astride his father's horse. There, held by the Emperor, in a position to see and be seen by all, the little Prince finished the review, which pleased him quite as well as the great Te Deum.

This memorable celebration closed with a banquet and a grand illumination, and as Napoleon Day came on the morrow, the festivities continued, and the people thus enjoyed two fine holidays in succession.

The Imperial family next spent a few weeks at St. Sauveur in the Pyrenees, and at Biarritz by the sea, before going to Compiègne for the autumn hunting season. While they were staying there, the treaty of Zürich was signed, and all the French openly rejoiced over the conclusion of the Italian war. But, although hostilities had ceased, political discussions were still rife, for King Victor Emmanuel was anxious to become master of all Italy, and have Rome for his capital; while the Pope was determined not to relinquish any of his tem-

poral power, and expected the French to go on supporting him as before.

Some of the French were in favour of Italian unity, others inclined to Papal temporal power, so this foreign question caused still more confusion in France, where political parties were already numerous. The Empress, who was a fervent Roman Catholic, naturally sided with the Pope, for whom she felt besides a particular affection, because he was the godfather of her son.

Since acting as Regent, Eugénie had felt a lively interest in state affairs, so she willingly yielded to her husband's urging, and assisted at the cabinet meetings, and even at times gave her views upon the subject discussed. She was sufficiently intelligent and independent to have convictions of her own, and as she expressed them freely, even when they differed from her husband's, a new party soon rallied around her. Other political parties were also well represented at court, and Napoleon described the state of affairs pretty aptly when he once whimsically exclaimed: "How can you expect my government to get on? The Empress is a Legitimist; De Morny is an Orleanist; Prince Napoleon is a Republican; and I am a Socialist. Persigny is the only Imperialist — and he is mad."

The men he thus jestingly mentioned were, however, his chief advisers, men for whom he felt the greatest affection, and who were devoted to his interests. But, like him, they were in many respects unprincipled men, and unlike him several were very mercenary and inclined to speculate. The Emperor, however, did not perceive these faults in his adherents, for he was bound to them by close ties of family or friendship. As we have seen, Prince Napoleon was his first cousin; De Morny his half-brother, although the relationship was not ac-

knowledged, Napoleon having discovered its existence only after Queen Hortense's death. Persigny had shared Napoleon's fortunes for years, sharing his arrest at the time of the unlucky attempt at Strasbourg. These men, with Walewski, the illegitimate son of Napoleon I., helped the Emperor maintain his authority, and rendered him invaluable services, and Persigny was first to caution him against letting the Empress interfere in state affairs, saying that such a procedure might in time have baleful consequences.

In fact, Eugénie would have been far happier had the Emperor heeded this advice, for the cabinet meetings were very disquieting to her peace of mind. She had espoused the cause of the Pope so warmly, that she once vowed: "If the Pope leaves the Quirinal, I shall leave the Tuileries! I would rather see the Emperor murdered than doomed for ever." In those passionate words lay the explanation of the Empress' conduct, for she really believed her husband would forfeit his soul's salvation if he did not support the Pope's cause. Those who did not concur in these views, naturally accused her of being very bigoted, among others Princess Clothilde, who, although very pious, too, was particularly anxious that her father should secure Rome for his capital. This difference of views helped estrange the two women, who, as we have seen, in spite of good intentions, were never real friends, although they apparently lived on the best of terms together.

The year 1860 was to prove very eventful, for France not only made a treaty of commerce with England, but proceeded — notwithstanding the Treaty of Zürich — to annex the province of Savoy and the territory of Nice. Walewski, seeing the provisions of the treaty he had made completely ignored, resigned his position, so it was



his successor, Thouvenel, who arranged the Treaty of Turin, whereby these two provinces were granted to France, provided the inhabitants signified their consent by plébiscite. Toward the end of January, the court went into mourning for Princess Stéphanie, Dowager Duchess of Baden, a niece of Josephine, who had just died. Still, court mournings are very brief. So early in February their Majesties could attend the Pompeian feast given by Prince Napoleon, and a masked ball at the residence of the Duchess of Alva, Eugénie's sister, who had come to settle in Paris with her husband and children.

Early in June, the Emperor and Empress hastened to Lyons, to greet the widow of Nicholas I., who was passing through the city. The people were delighted to see Napoleon again, and especially eager to view the Empress, whom they had never beheld. A contemporary writes: "They were charmed. Her Majesty, who is thirty-four, looks twenty-five. She is really lovely, and her kindness is excessive. When the people crowded too closely around the carriage, she was always afraid that those who drew near to present petitions would be hurt." The Emperor, perceiving the popular enthusiasm, promised to return to Lyons in August, when the people could fête him as much as they wished, but in the mean time returned with his wife to Fontainebleau.

There, as usual, Eugénie occupied the apartment known as the room of the Five Maries, for it had been inhabited by five queens of that name, including her favourite among the French sovereigns, the unhappy Marie Antoinette. Here, as at Compiègne, their Majesties entertained considerably, dining in state every evening in the famous Hall of Henry II. But the Emperor could not remain there long, having promised to go to

Baden to meet sundry German Princes, whom his policy disquieted, and who feared lest he would next try to restore France's ancient boundaries, by claiming all the territory west of the Rhine. Napoleon succeeded in calming their worst apprehensions, and returned home only a few days before the death of his uncle, Jerome Bonaparte, the last surviving brother of the Great Emperor. This Prince died while the Second Empire was still at its height, and was buried with great pomp in the Invalides, — the Bonaparte family tomb.

A few weeks later, the Empress set out alone for Eaux Bonnes, where she was to spend twenty days, leaving her son at St. Cloud. He was now four years old, and when the pupils of the Versailles Lycée petitioned for a visit, he was sent thither in state, with his governess and equerry. Here, too, he acquitted himself very creditably, and as he begged the teachers to give the pupils a holiday, the latter cheered him with tremendous gusto when he drove away.

The Emperor, desiring to exhibit him to the soldiers at Châlons too, sent orders that he should join him there. Like all small boys, the Prince Imperial delighted in soldiers, so he was very happy in this camp, where he was allowed to go in and out of the tents, speak to the soldiers at will, and ride beside his father whenever he reviewed the troops. This last performance charmed the men; for Louis had already learned to manage his small steed with considerable skill, having ridden ever since his third year. Both his parents were excellent riders, and his mother was determined he should be quite as fearless as herself. She therefore often considered his attendants over-careful, and seeing him on his pony one day, pacing slowly along, gave the animal a sharp cut with her whip, which started him off at a brisk trot.

The riding-master, terrified lest an accident should befal his precious charge, so far lost control of his manners, i is said, as to swear vehemently, while he dashed off i pursuit; but the faithful governess helplessly wrung he hands, exclaiming: "Oh, Madame, how could you you should remember you have only one!"

One of the principal amusements of the little Princ was to watch the soldiers make their soup, although h particularly disliked that part of his own dinner. Indeed it was only because his attendants gravely assured him that he must eat soup if he would grow tall, that he ever consented to touch it. One day, when strolling about the camp, he positively convulsed his audience by planting himself in front of a huge grenadier, and wonderingly exclaiming, after a prolonged contemplation of his unusual size: "Goodness, what a lot of soup you must have eaten to grow so big!"

The Emperor and his son again reviewed the troops together on Napoleon Day, before proceeding to Paris, where they gladly met Eugénie, who had just returned from Eaux Bonnes. That evening, Paris was brilliantly illuminated, and grand fireworks were set off in different parts of the city for the amusement of an admiring crowd. These fireworks were also plainly visible from St. Cloud, where their Majesties spent the rest of the day, receiving congratulations from all parts of the Empire, for the Emperor's official birthday was then the principal national holiday.

A few days after this celebration, the Imperial couple set out on the longest and most magnificent tour which they made during their seventeen years' joint reign. Leaving St. Cloud in the middle of August, 1860, they first stopped at Dijon, where the Mayor addressed Eugénie as follows: "Madame, Burgundy is proud

and happy to welcome your Majesty to its ancient capital. It knows — as well as all the rest of France — that, seated on the throne, you are a gracious Providence for the poor and unhappy, and that, should need arise, you would be the brave sovereign of a great people!"

Their Majesties, after attending Mass, received all the town dignitaries, and then partook of a fine dinner before setting out for the official ball. Eugénie drove thither in a brilliantly lighted coach, so all the people could see her in the splendour of full dress attire and crowned with her flashing diadem. She seemed so fair, that a prolonged shout of heartfelt admiration accompanied her, and the people marvelled at her great beauty, at the charming way in which she acknowledged their homage, and at the magnificence of the "Hundred Guards" forming her escort.

The next stop made by the Imperial party was at Châlons, where a deputation of young girls presented flowers to Eugénie, who next proceeded to Lyons. The people there were so enthusiastic that their Majesties had to appear on the balcony several times to acknowledge their greetings, although they spent several days in this city, inaugurating and examining a commercial and artistic exposition, and attending balls and reviews. When they reached Chambéry, in Savoy, Napoleon and Eugénie took part in the Te Deum for the elections, for the inhabitants had almost unanimously declared in favour of annexation to France. The usual succession of receptions, dinners, balls, reviews, and illuminations followed, before their Majesties passed on to Aix-les-Bains and Annecy, where one of the magistrates thus greeted Eugénie: —

"Madame, the city of Saint Francis de Sales rejoices and is proud of the honour of having you, even a brief



space of time, within its walls. It is aware that your Majesty's visit is that of an angel of goodness, kindness, and charity!"

Here the festivities were charmingly varied by a torch-light regatta, and Eugénie enjoyed a delightful excursion on the lake, which is noted for its picturesque scenery. The state dinner offered by the authorities was prolonged to so late an hour, that the Empress discovered she would not have time to change her dinner costume for a ball gown, before going to the imposing function to which she had been invited. As she did not wish to disappoint the people, who expect splendour on the part of a sovereign, she asked General Fleury whether it would not do if she added the crown jewels and a court mantle to her present attire. He answered that nothing could suit the public better, and the Empress, thus adorned, produced, as he had predicted, a wonderful sensation.

On the first of September, after visiting Thonon, the Imperial party reached Salenches, where they had the satisfaction of beholding a magnificent storm, and heard the thunder crash and reverberate among the lofty mountains. Here, too, they greatly admired the sturdy mountaineers, stationed in groups around the triumphal arch, before journeying on to Chamonix, where the Empress explored part of the famous Mer de Glace.

Their Majesties now retraced their steps to Chambéry, where a new ovation awaited them, and stopped at Grenoble, Valence, Orange, and Avignon, visiting the Roman ruins and ancient buildings, inspecting the hospitals and other charitable institutions, and attending the usual series of entertainments given for their benefit. In the last named town, the Emperor ordered the restoration of the old Papal palace, before setting out for Marseilles, by way of Tarascon and Arles, where only brief

stops were made. The Marseillais entertained their Majesties with due magnificence, offering to give the Emperor a beautiful castle just outside of their city, if he would only come and sojourn among them from time to time. To Eugénie, they gave a costly bracelet, containing a fine miniature portrait of her son, knowing she would prize such a gift more than anything else. Their Majesties next proceeded by sea to Toulon, where the magistrate pompously greeted Eugénie as a "A modern Blanche of Castille, whose great and pious memory you recall on the grandest throne in the world," and concluded his speech with the cordial wish: "May you long enjoy, Madame, all the happiness which, as a monarch, a wife, and a mother, your heart can crave."

Their Majesties left Toulon, still by sea, and landing at Villa Franca, drove to Nice, where, as usual, they attended Mass before beginning their round of festivities. Here, too, they were gladly welcomed, and the people spared no effort to testify their joy at forming at last part of France.

This visit over, their Majesties sailed to Corsica, where they made a pious pilgrimage to Napoleon's birthplace, viewed all the family relics collected there, and visited the church where Madame Lætitia Bonaparte and her brother Cardinal Fesch were laid to rest. Ajaccio did its best to entertain them sumptuously, before they left for Algiers on the Imperial yacht. It was while Eugénie was thus sailing across the Mediterranean Sea, that her sister — who had been ailing for some time — suddenly died in Paris. But no tidings of this misfortune had reached her when she landed at Algiers, and went straight to the cathedral as usual. On the morrow the Empress laid the cornerstone for the new boulevard which was to bear her name, before

witnessing a picturesque exhibition of Arab skill in horsemanship, hunting, and fighting. The performers not only gave a sham battle, but pursued ostriches and gazelles, and hunted with hawks. Finally they drew up in a line of battle, rushed madly up the height on which the Empress stood, and dropped suddenly on one knee before her. The spectators declare that it was an affecting sight to perceive the whole line of Arab soldiers gasp in admiration, when, on looking up, they beheld the beautiful Empress so near at hand. She was greatly charmed by the warriors, and it is said that she took such a fancy to a waiter of ebon hue who served her during this visit, that she attached him permanently to her service. This man, who boasted of royal descent, was as haughty as he was picturesque, utterly refusing to wait upon any one except his beautiful mistress. He always stood directly behind her chair at table, where his dark skin and gaudy costume contrasted in a striking manner with Eugénie's fair complexion and exquisite form.

Eugénie was very happy during this Algerian visit, for her husband carefully concealed the sad news which he had just received concerning the Duchess of Alva, and she felt no misgivings. Knowing that the people would be grievously disappointed if they did not both attend the ball, Napoleon kept his own counsel until it was over, and even then merely informed Eugénie that her sister was very ill, and that they would return home at once. The Empress, pale with apprehension, hastened the preparations for departure, and on her way down to the yacht repeatedly cried: "Oh! if we can only get there in time." All who heard her knew it was already too late, but none dared reveal that fact, and the yacht steamed off at full speed in spite of the rough weather

which made all on board very uncomfortable. The Empress alone showed no signs of fear or of seasickness, for she was thinking only of the sister who had been in the same time her friend and confidant, and whom she loved with all the intensity of her nature.

The storm proved so violent, and the magnificent new yacht so unsafe, that the captain dared not cross the Golfe du Lion in the teeth of the storm, and, therefore, landed his august passengers at the small port of Vendres. Of course, no provisions had been made there for their reception, and they discovered on landing that the nearest railway station was several miles away. While his suite were scouring the town to procure some means of transportation thither, the Emperor, who had been suffering greatly from seasickness, gently broke the news to his wife that her darling sister was no more. Poor Eugénie was fairly bowed down with grief, but, nevertheless, determined to hurry on in hopes of viewing her sister's remains once more, and of taking leave of that beloved form before it was laid in the grave.

The Imperial party, therefore, crowded into the grocers' and butchers' carts, — the only vehicles available, — and drove through the pouring rain to the railway station, from whence they journeyed straight through to Paris. On the way they received sundry telegrams, and Eugénie thus learned that her haste was fruitless, her sister's funeral having already taken place.

When she drove into the great gate at St. Cloud, she saw her boy, who had come thither in his impatience to welcome his parents home; but even the sight of this beloved son could not dispel the cloud of grief which enveloped Eugénie. This blow, coming as it did, at the end of such rejoicings and splendour as accompanied the Imperial journey, made so painful an impression

upon the Empress, that it changed her greatly. Many people commented upon the fact that the loss of her sister seemed to have deprived her of the zest and enjoyment of youth, for Eugénie, who, until then in private, had seemed like a light-hearted girl, was now suddenly transformed into a mature and disenchanted woman. She sank into a state of morbid depression, and wrote to a friend: "If you only knew all I have suffered lately, the gnawing anxiety during my journey home from Algeria! And then to find, on reaching home, only an empty house! Not to have had the consolation of even embracing that lifeless body; all that is a brief epitome of the price we pay for an exalted position here on earth. One often attains it only by trampling over one's own heart! I have been indulging in sad retrospection, and I wonder whether earthly gifts are worth the efforts we make to retain our hold upon them?"

The Duchess of Alva had been Eugénie's chief friend and sole confidant, and, being of a calm, gentle temperament, had proved a soothing companion and a safe adviser. She knew all Eugénie's matrimonial troubles, and had sustained her by her sympathy in times of trouble. And now that this sister was gone, Eugénie missed her sorely, for not only did the Emperor wring her heart by again proving faithless, but, contrary to her wishes, he allowed Victor Emmanuel to war against the Pope unchecked, and refused to interfere in behalf of the King of Naples, who was then on the eve of being ousted from his realm.

This accumulation of sorrows proved more than poor Eugénie could endure, and court gossip relates that, not being able to bring the Emperor back to a fitting sense of decency and duty, she suddenly left home after the brief hunting season at Compiègne, and journeyed off

incognita to England and Scotland, although it was then late in autumn and a cheerless season in which to travel. The Empress left with very few attendants, and the official newspapers immediately announced that she was travelling solely for her health. But friends soon interfered, and a correspondence ensued between the Imperial couple, which, rumour further relates, resulted in a complete reconciliation.

On her way home the Empress privately visited Queen Victoria, and embarking at Folkestone, upon a vessel of the French navy which had been sent thither to get her, returned in state to France. The Emperor met her at Amiens, and personally escorted her home, where her return was celebrated by a joyful family dinner, the little Prince being admitted to his parents' table.

This attractive child was a great comfort to Eugénie, who often had him with her, and watched over every detail of his life and occupation until he was ten years of age. She also superintended his studies, chose all his clothes, had him brought to her the first thing every morning, and spent hours developing his active mind. Sometimes they both went down the private staircase to the Emperor's study, where the boy played while the father worked, or helped him turn on his lathe, manufacture furniture, or pursue some of the many mechanical occupations which the Emperor loved, and practised whenever he needed relaxation from his arduous desk work. After lunching together, the Imperial family generally separated to fulfil important duties, but the Empress always saw her son before he set out for his daily drive, and, after the Orsini attempt, never let him depart without crossing his brow as a preservative against evil.

The little Prince's carriage, open or closed according to the weather, was always surrounded by a mounted

escort, and his favourite drive was in the direction of the Bois de Boulogne, where one of his father's friends had a country seat, in whose grounds he was allowed to play at will. His playmates were Louis Conneau, the son of his father's physician and devoted friend, — a boy of his own age, — and his three cousins, the children of the Duchess of Alva, whom the Empress cared for like a tender mother, after that sister's death.

The Prince Imperial and Louis Conneau were almost inseparable, although, like most children, they frequently disagreed, and occasionally quarrelled quite vehemently. But the Prince Imperial was so kind-hearted that he was always ready to forgive and forget. Once, having invited his young friend to dinner, he bespoke their favourite dessert — raspberry cream. A quarrel having preceded this meal, Louis Conneau went off in high dudgeon. When the dessert was put on the table, the Prince Imperial burst into tears, and, sobbing convulsively, told the servant to carry it all to Conneau, saying he could not enjoy it alone.

After his eighth birthday, the Prince Imperial always dined with his parents, he and his mother sitting on either side of the Emperor, and, during the early part of the evening, he and his young companions were wont to play noisy games, chasing each other around the lofty rooms, or crowding around the Emperor, who never checked their boisterous spirits and often played loto or dominoes with them.

The Prince, his friends, and his father were equally fond of innocent practical jokes, so the young people were delighted when, on the first of April, the Emperor once had turbot served for every course of the dinner, thus giving them "Poisson d'Avril" (Poisson d'Avril, or April fish, is the French for "April Fool") galore.

Eugénie

One evening, the usual guests at the Imperial table trembled and turned pale, because an owl appeared at one of the Tuileries windows. The Emperor, hearing some of them whisper about an evil omen, tried to cheer them up by declaring they were highly honoured thus to receive a visit from the "bird of wisdom;" but, in spite of his efforts, he could not dispel their alarms. The next night they were still more terrified, for on looking apprehensively toward the same window, they beheld a whole family of owls stationed on the window-sill! This time, the Emperor, too, looked grave and made no remarks; but when the guests rose from table, they discovered that he had fooled them all by having a number of stuffed owls carefully ranged there in order of size.

Eugénie's firmness and strictness with her own son and with her sister's children was often considered extreme, but she had to react against the Emperor's indulgence. He always winked at the childrens' disobedience, encouraged them in their mischief, tried to beg them off from lessons or punishments, wanted to grant their every request, or gratify their every whim, and the severest reprimand he could ever be induced to give his son was a very gentle: "Come, Louis, don't be silly."

But Eugénie was wiser, and wishing to make her son a man of whom she might justly be proud, she sensibly began to train him early, and directed that he should be brought up as simply as possible. She also checked all attempts at flattery and adulation, and when one of the courtiers once attempted to bend the knee and kiss the Prince's hand, vehemently insisted upon his being treated just like any other small boy, and answered all objections by exclaiming sensibly: "Nonsense, he is only a child!"

Even as a little fellow, the Prince Imperial took a lively interest in soldiers, and was therefore very happy when allowed to don a uniform. But his attendants impressed upon him the fact that the wearing of such a costume entailed good behaviour on his part, and brought him most quickly to order, when inclined to be naughty, by informing him gravely that he was disgracing his uniform.

At ten years of age, the Prince was handed over to the care of his preceptor, General Frossard, who placed him under strict discipline, and insisted upon a prompt, regular, and conscientious discharge of all his duties. Although he had very little trouble with the Prince himself, his task was far more difficult with the Emperor, who sent for his son at all hours to exhibit him to a caller, or to relieve what he deemed the tedium of a distasteful task. As soon as the preceptor perceived this stratagem, he declared that these interruptions must cease, and thereafter, when the Emperor sent for his son, — aside from the hours when he was at leisure to respond to such summons, — General Frossard calmly sent back word "that his Majesty was respectfully informed the Prince's studies could not be interrupted until the stated hour." Sometimes, when the child was with his father, and was reluctant to obey his tutor's summons, the indulgent parent hid his cap to prolong the visit. The General, however, soon became aware of this subterfuge also, and put an end to it by carrying an extra cap in his pocket, which he immediately produced when the excuse was offered that the Prince could not leave until his cap was found.

It was in the year 1860 that Prince Metternich first came to France as Austrian ambassador, bringing with him his young wife. A remarkably witty and attractive

woman, although not really pretty, Countess Metternich — who was an excellent mother and wife — was nevertheless somewhat of a Bohemian in her tastes. Perfectly virtuous herself, she nevertheless enjoyed shocking people, and dancing as it were on the edge of a precipice.

When she first beheld the Empress Eugénie, she was captivated by the purity of feature and vivacity of expression which so enhanced her beauty, and rather vexed some of the court ladies by fervently crying: "Would that I could be her Princesse de Lamballes!"

These jealous dames showed their displeasure by retorting stiffly: "More than one Frenchwoman would aspire to such an honour." Still, although so open an admirer of the Empress' beauty, Princess Metternich, who belonged to a very ancient and noble Austrian family, never forgot that Eugénie had risen from a comparatively modest station to her present eminence, and was not always careful how she expressed this conviction. For instance, weary of the tedium of an evening spent in the palace, where she was visiting, she once directed her friends in a whisper to escape as soon as they could and join her in her apartment. Then, pretending a sudden illness, she excused herself from further attendance and withdrew.

The fun had just begun in her rooms, and she and her friends were dancing there merrily, when the doors were suddenly flung wide open and the Empress appeared. Anxious about Madame de Metternich, Eugénie had followed her, as soon as possible, to see that she had every care. She was therefore surprised and indignant at the trickery used, and being very frank, then and there expressed her displeasure in no measured terms. But Madame de Metternich, who would brook no



criticism, immediately interrupted, exclaiming hotly: "Madame, you forget that *I* came into the world a great lady, and I will not allow any reprimand to be addressed to me!"

This altercation caused a brief coldness in their relations, and for a time Princess Metternich did not appear at court; but after a while, the cloud blew over, and she resumed her position there, becoming once more leader in all the court revels. But she was so autocratic that whenever she got up tableaux or entertainments all those whose services she enlisted had to do exactly as she wished. One fair lady, having determined, on one occasion, to wear a costume of her own devising, instead of the one planned by Madame de Metternich, a lively quarrel ensued. The Empress, hoping to smooth out matters, drew Madame de Metternich apart, and urged her to yield, pleading gently in excuse for the court lady's obstinacy the fact that her mother was mad. But the Princess, beside herself with anger at the opposition she encountered, would listen to no argument, and flatly declared: "Well, my father is mad, and I will not yield any more than she."

This sally greatly amused the court, for the Princess' father, if not actually mad, was very eccentric, doing all sorts of unheard-of deeds to exhibit the perfection of his horsemanship, of which he was inordinately proud.

Madame de Metternich also often encouraged the Empress to make innovations in the styles, and once urged her to appear at the races at Fontainebleau in a short skirt. A few of the older ladies, who disapproved of this novelty, took occasion to remonstrate privately with the Princess, asking her whether she would advise a similar costume to her own sovereign. Madame de Metternich carelessly answered: "Oh! that is very

different. Of course I would not try to persuade the Empress Elizabeth to go out in short skirts. But *our* Empress is a royal Princess, whereas yours is only Mademoiselle de Montijo!"

The Emperor, far more keen-sighted in this matter than his wife, frequently cautioned Eugénie to be careful, saying he fancied that Madame de Metternich was somewhat of a traitor, and repeated all she heard for the benefit of the Austrian court, while she often tried to get hold of state secrets. But Eugénie never suspected double dealing, and went on trusting everybody until convinced that her confidence had really been misplaced. In such cases she was too ruthless, and no motives of policy could make her pretend to like and respect people whom she had learned to despise. This undiplomatic frankness often troubled the Emperor, who, when any one complained to him concerning what they termed her capricious moods, tried to smooth over the difficulty by saying suavely: "You know the Empress is very impulsive; but in reality, I am sure she is very fond of you."

Princess Metternich was so clever and quick at repartee, that she was a great addition to Parisian society, and her sallies were quoted everywhere. She has besides the honour of having introduced Wagner to the Parisians, for shortly after her arrival in the capital she begged the Emperor to order "Tannhäuser." He did so, merely to be agreeable to her; but although all the court were present for the first performance of this now famous opera, it then fell very flat, and some of the parts were actually hissed, for the Parisians preferred at that time catchy music like Offenbach's.

Owing to her mourning and consequent depression, the Empress, as we have seen, took very little interest in

social entertainments during the winter of 1860–61. In fact she never appeared in public save when her presence was necessary, and could not restrain her tears when the officials presented their congratulations on New Year's Day. But although she refrained whenever she could from appearing at the balls or at the theatre, she craved as much exercise as possible, and was therefore greatly interested when the ponds in the parks froze over, and some of the Russian ladies in the capital began to skate. The Emperor, who had spent much of his life out of France — where such an amusement is rare — delighted in skating also, and all Parisians enthusiastically adopted the new sport. A skate merchant, who had had six thousand pairs of skates on hand for more than ten years, therefore not only disposed of his whole stock in an incredibly short space of time, but had to order twice as many from Holland to supply immediate demands.

Eugénie, who was a magnificent horsewoman, and who delighted in all kinds of brisk exercise, now determined to learn to skate too, and in a couple of days mastered the art so thoroughly that she ventured to appear in public. It is said, that as a fall would have seemed unseemly on the part of an Empress, and as none of the skaters, save the Emperor, were of sufficiently high rank or closely enough related to her to venture to hold her up, her ingenious teacher invented a padded and beribboned stick for her use. The Empress grasped this in the middle, and held it firmly in front of her, while two expert skaters, seizing either end, guided her hither and thither with the utmost speed and safety.

Skating parties now became all the rage, and the ladies vied with one another in devising the most picturesque skating costumes. But popular enthusiasm

reached its height when the Emperor ordered a night carnival on the ice, in which he and the Empress took part.

That winter was also made memorable for the Prince Imperial by a children's party, given by Princess Mathilde in his honour. He came thither in all the glory of a marquis' dress of the time of Louis XV. But he was particularly pleased because the music was furnished by an orchestra of child-musicians, and very anxious to take a little flute-player's place so that the latter might dance too. Still, there was one drawback to his enjoyment, his high-heeled red shoes were very uncomfortable. He therefore slipped out of them during supper, and kicked them far under the table. When called to task for such unseemly behaviour at a party, and directed to put them on again, he vehemently protested he would not, saying: "Mamma has given me leave to do anything I please." Still his manners were as a rule excellent, and small as he then was, he thanked Princess Mathilde most heartily for all the pleasure she had given him.

Children's parties were only a small part of the winter diversions, for almost everybody entertained lavishly, and the regulation number of grand balls was given in the Tuileries, with all the accustomed pomp. The Empress graced these festivities in her wonted charming way, winning great encomiums for the tasteful elegance of her attire, for the dignity with which she received, and especially for her beauty, which still seemed as radiant as ever.

In April, the grand mausoleum planned by Visconti in the Invalides, was finally completed, and Eugénie went thither with her husband to see the body of Napoleon laid in its porphyry tomb. The little Prince

was also present at this ceremony, descending with his parents into the crypt, to sprinkle holy water upon the coffin of the illustrious founder of his dynasty before it was enclosed in its red sarcophagus. Still, it is said that this final ceremony did not prove nearly as imposing as the interment under Louis Philippe, twenty years before, when Napoleon's ashes were brought back to France, to rest "on the banks of the Seine which he had loved so well."

In June, at Fontainebleau, Napoleon settled the long pending Italian Question, by formally recognising Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy. When he announced this decision in his cabinet, Eugénie, who was present, burst into tears and fled, for she could not endure the thought that her husband was despoiling the Holy Father. The Emperor, feeling he must pursue this policy, despite her opposition, remained speechless for a few moments after this outburst, and continued the business on hand only after he had despatched one of his friends to see after the Empress.

But whereas this was a painful memory for Eugénie to connect with the picturesque castle of Fontainebleau, she was soon to take part in a curious and amusing pageant, for the Emperor had decided that he would receive there the ambassadors sent by the Kings of Siam. The panelled Hall of Henry II. was, therefore, duly prepared for the reception of these foreign guests, a dais and throne being erected for their Majesties in front of the historic mantelpiece. The court was ordered to appear in gala attire, but cautioned to maintain strict decorum, although Oriental etiquette required the ambassadors to approach the Emperor by crawling on their elbows and knees to the foot of the throne. The Prince Imperial, who begged to be present, was duly

schooled too, and the Duke of Bassano stationed directly behind him to check any sign of merriment, should he forget the instructions he had received.

The hour having struck, the Emperor and Empress took their places under the dais, the Prince Imperial standing beside his father, while the court ladies and gentlemen grouped themselves on either side of the throne. Then the Master of Ceremonies announced the Siamese ambassadors, who, clad in tunics and trousers of gold brocade, and followed by their attendants, came in solemnly on all fours! The principal ambassador experienced great difficulty in covering the ground in this ridiculous attitude, for he wore a pyramidal, stiff-brimmed hat, and carried besides two golden bowls, wherein rested his master's letters enclosed in jewelled caskets. The "greenish chocolate" complexion of these foreign visitors, their bright eyes, queer costumes, and characteristic entrance greatly interested all the spectators, some of whom, however, hardly dared glance at them for fear they should laugh.

At the foot of the first step, the ambassador paused, poised himself on one elbow, and made a speech which was interpreted by a French missionary. Then, resuming his painful journey, he crept on to the throne to present his letters. Napoleon leaned eagerly forward to receive them, and end a scene which was distressing to a man of his kindly nature. Only then would the ambassadors consent to resume the perpendicular, and when the Empress kissed the ten-year-old son of one of the emissaries, the delighted father rapturously cried: "Now, my son, thy days will be happy."

These ambassadors brought the Emperor and Empress strange gifts, which were exhibited on tables, placed in the deep window recesses on either side of the Hall, and

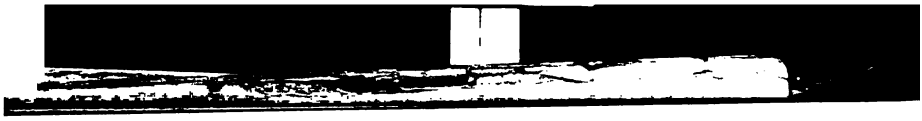
at the foot of the throne. They included a filigree crown, a throne, a palanquin, parasols of rich and quaint designs and fabrics, jewelled harness, golden cups, cloisonné enamels, priceless native weapons, stuffs, and other curiosities too numerous to mention. This famous reception of the First Siamese Embassy has been painted by Gerôme, who placed in his picture authentic portraits of the principal persons present, including his own.

A few days later, the Emperor departed for Vichy, and after his cure there ended, returned to St. Cloud, whither his family had preceded him to welcome the King of Sweden, a grandson of Napoleon's famous General Bernadotte. Entertainments suited to the season were given in honour of this royal guest, and visits paid to the Tuileries, to Versailles, and to the camp of Châlons, where a series of brilliant manœuvres were executed, and where the performance concluded with a grand review.

Two days after the departure of this monarch, Napoleon inaugurated the Boulevard Malesherbe, which had been cut by his order. Then, as the Empress was going to Eaux Bonnes for a cure, he took his son with him to Châlons to spend "Napoleon Day" with the army. This sojourn over, father and son joined Eugénie at Biarritz, and enjoyed a few quiet weeks by the sea with Countess de Montijo, who had journeyed thither from Spain to meet them. The little Prince so enjoyed playing on the beach with other children that it is said he felt very reluctant to leave Biarritz for St. Cloud and Compiègne, where Eugénie was pleased to see him take part in a little play. The Empress entertained and hunted here as usual, and conducted several picnic parties to Pierrefonds, — a picturesque old feudal castle, completely restored by Viollet-le-Duc. One of her



THE RECEPTION OF THE AMBASSADORS OF SIAM, 1862.
Gérôme.



august visitors was the King of Holland, and the most important decision Napoleon took here was to aid Maximilian obtain possession of the Mexican throne. It was for that reason that French troops were sent across the ocean; but the Emperor little suspected that he would yet have to desert his ally, who was to meet with a very sad end a few years later. This sojourn at Compiègne was greatly saddened by the sudden tidings of the death of the Portuguese King, and the consequent departure of the Princes, who were among Eugénie's guests. Still the court mourning this death entailed was soon over, and gaieties were resumed when their Majesties returned to the Tuileries, to begin 1863 with the usual official reception and congratulations. We are told that Eugénie began this year by thinking of the poor, for whose benefit she insured her life for a large sum of money. Part of this sum was appointed as a permanent endowment for the institution she had founded for workingmen's daughters, which prospered as long as she was on the throne.

The most delightful experience this year reserved for Eugénie, was a visit to Spain, which, while it displeased the French, afforded her infinite satisfaction. She was not only glad to revisit her native land, but proud to be an honoured and admired guest at the Spanish court, where she had formerly appeared merely as a subject. She also enjoyed the sensation produced by her beauty, her jewels, her dress, her wit and animation, and was delighted to speak her native language once more. The American ambassador, attending a court dinner where she was present, writes: "Perhaps, for an Empress, she was too much of a coquette, but as an Andalusian, — which she is, — and looked upon simply as a woman, she was the most perfect creature I have ever seen anywhere."

Her coquetry, and especially her anxiety to please in Madrid, seemed particularly offensive to the French, who considered it beneath the dignity of the sovereign of so mighty an Empire as their own, and they now began to mutter: "She was determined to become an Empress. Well, now let her act like one." But Eugénie, quite oblivious of the displeasure she innocently occasioned, enjoyed her visit thoroughly before proceeding leisurely northward once more, to join her husband and son at Biarritz.

This proved, as usual, the Imperial holiday, for "Villa Eugénia" was not large enough to permit entertaining to any extent, and their Majesties were only too glad to be rid for a brief space of time of the irksome pomp and etiquette which surrounded them all the rest of the year. It was at Biarritz, taking sea-baths, that Eugénie always regained sufficient strength to fulfil her trying court duties. These proved a severe tax upon her impaired health, and often, when some grand function was over, and she had returned to her private apartments, she sank wearily into a chair, tore off her ornaments with feverish haste, and tossed them all, one after another, into the outstretched gown of her attendant. The latter had to see that the crown jewels were duly restored to the official keeper, and Eugénie's private gems put carefully away, for she owned a large and valuable collection of precious stones of her own. Their custody was entrusted to a faithful old Spanish attendant whom the Empress affectionately called "Pepa," while she was known in the rest of the palace as Madame Pollet. She also had charge of all the Empress' wearing apparel, which was stored in huge wardrobes, or presses, in rooms directly above Eugénie's dressing-room. Speaking tubes and an ingenious lift

permitted the Empress' orders to be transmitted direct to this department, and her garments were lowered through the ceiling, to avoid crushing and soiling them in the long and narrow stairs and corridors.

A number of carefully made dummies were used by her Majesty's tirewomen to try on her dresses and wraps, thus saving her much fatigue. Gowns were always submitted to Eugénie's approval on those lay figures, so she could stand off and judge of the effect some costume would produce, and have it altered under her direction, without undergoing the boredom of standing for any length of time. Although fond of dress for public occasions, the Empress was always very simply attired at home, appearing even early in the morning in a plain black cloth or silk. Over this tight-fitting gown, she threw a handsome wrap before driving out for her almost daily inspection of some charitable institution. Very often, when bent upon such an errand, Eugénie went out incognita, but as her striking appearance and Titian hair was sure to betray her sooner or later, she often went closely veiled. Once or twice, it is said, she even donned a black wig, so as to be able to stroll along the street unobserved, and look into the shop-windows with as much freedom as the humblest of her subjects.

While making a charity visit, Eugénie once interfered in a quarrel between two boys. She had seen the elder snatch a cake from a child of inferior age and size; so, hating injustice, she promptly confiscated the cake and gave it back to its rightful owner. The bully, however, set up such a roar, that a number of viragoes suddenly appeared, and setting their arms akimbo, poured out a fearful volley of abuse upon the fine ladies who meddled with the affairs of the poor. Had it not been for one of the ubiquitous detectives, who hurried Eugénie into

a carriage and out of harm's way, these irate women might then and there have resorted to violent means of expressing their displeasure with any interference in their concerns.

The Empress, as we have seen, was naturally leader of French fashions, and it was in her time that Monsieur Worth and Madame Virot laid the foundations of their now world-wide and enviable reputations. But Eugénie often designed her costumes herself, and criticised and frequently altered those supplied by her dressmakers. She is, besides, the inventor of many practical fashions, such as invisible hair nets, coloured petticoats, and last but not least, the invaluable "en tout cas" or summer umbrella, which has only increased in popularity in the course of time. Eugénie's state gowns cost enormous sums, some being valued at 100,000 francs, without counting her ornaments; while even simple wraps often cost 50,000 francs, and Madame Virot asked 1000 francs for a bonnet. Four times a year the Empress reviewed her wardrobe, bestowing all the clothes she did not care to keep upon her ladies, who, it is said, sold these cast-off garments to South American merchants. All Eugénie's white shoes and slippers, however, were sent to the charitable institutions in which she was interested, to serve for the communion toilet of the little girls, for Eugénie's feet were so very small that her slippers fitted these children exactly.

Eugénie was so indifferent to her attire at home that she sometimes almost shocked her court ladies, one of whom reports that she saw her in a common woollen cardigan jacket in her rooms, such as the market women wore; but Eugénie donned this for comfort, for her rooms, like the rest of the palace, were almost uninhabitable in severe winter weather.

The Empress was always busy and never indolent, hence she owned no lounging robes at all; and when the Prince Imperial took the measles, and she wished to sit up with him at night, one of her women had to go out and purchase a ready-made flannel wrapper for her use. This illness of the Prince Imperial proved a source of much anxiety to Eugénie for several years, for the physician, wishing to contradict the wild rumours afloat concerning him, allowed him to drive out too soon. A heavy cold taken during this drive produced a relapse, which left the Prince very delicate from about eight to fourteen. He caught this disease at a children's party in the Tuileries, from one of his partners who came to the dance although she had been rather ailing for several days, and her mother had noticed a rash on her neck while dressing her. But the child was so anxious to attend the party, that she successfully disguised her illness and danced all the evening. On reaching home, however, she was taken violently ill, and died on the morrow, her ball-dress and flowers serving to deck her for the tomb; but she communicated measles to many of the children present, some of whom were dangerously ill, and suffered for a long time from the consequences of her imprudence.

The Prince Imperial inherited his mother's taste for art, and early showed a remarkable taste and aptitude for drawing and modelling in wax or clay. He delighted in this latter pastime, and, it is said, often produced portraits of his father and attendants which resembled the models so ludicrously that Mérimée pronounced them "atrociously like!" Possessed of a keen sense of humour, the Prince often got into mischief. One day he received a box of christening candies in assorted colours. As he was never allowed sweets, he did not eat them,

but, thinking them very pretty, ran off to exhibit them to his mother. On his way to her rooms, he had to pass one of the magnificent "Cent Gardes" standing like a statue before his door. An impish idea suddenly popping through his head, he promptly emptied the whole contents of his box into the boot of this man, who, true to his training, gave no sign of perturbation. This perfectly natural boyish prank is erroneously ascribed by some writers to the Empress herself, whom they also accuse of being the heroine in the following tale. Colonel Verly, commander of the Palace Guards, was justly proud of his men's perfect discipline, and frequently boasted that nothing could, even for a second, disturb their statue-like immobility when on duty. The Empress hearing this, laughingly made a wager with Colonel Verly that *she* would cause the man then on guard in the neighbouring gallery to lapse from his rigid attitude. Colonel Verly accepted the challenge, and escorted Eugénie into the gallery, where she tried every device her bright wits could suggest to disturb the man's statuesque repose. All her wiles having failed, it is said she suddenly marched straight up to him and smartly boxed his ears. But even then, the soldier remained motionless, and Eugénie had to confess she had lost her wager. When Colonel Verly, by her orders, offered this guard a handsome gift to atone for the indignity which he had received, he is reported to have refused it, saying: "It is sufficient reward for me to have had the hand of my sovereign lady upon my cheek!"

Eugénie was very impetuous and high-spirited in her youth, but although such tales as these — and others even less credible — are told about her, her conduct was evidently far from being such as her detractors describe, for they have never been able to produce a shadow

of real proof to justify any of their allegations, and every one now knows that such stories owed their origin to malice only.

The year 1865 proved quite a varied one in the Imperial lives, which otherwise were very monotonous. During this year the Emperor lost his half-brother De Morny, and made his second visit to Algeria. But this time Eugénie refused to accompany him, and during his absence devoted her time to a round of charitable visits. In visiting La Roquette, — a penitentiary, — she was shocked to find child-prisoners doomed either to solitary imprisonment, or to idleness in the company of debasing associates, and immediately determined to effect a reform. Her aim was to place these poor children in the country, where their physical condition could be improved, and their minds and bodies trained so they should ultimately become self-respecting and self-supporting members of the community. Her suggestions were, however, met only by excuses and evasions on the part of the authorities, and one man finally ventured to remark, in hopes of discouraging her: "That is quite true, Madame, but there are so many difficulties in carrying out any plan, that there seems to be no means of help; and to talk about it is simply to stir up the emotions."

But Eugénie was not the woman to be deterred by opposition or ridicule from a purpose she had determined to carry out. She therefore retorted: "Excuse me, this is a matter of philanthropy, not of politics!" and, taking the whole affair into her own hands, pursued it vigorously to a successful end. By her prompt and energetic interference, many a child delinquent was transformed into a good citizen; and the reforms she instituted are still in force to-day, although it is thirty years since she ceased to rule in France.

Eugénie also visited the House of Correction for women, and was much affected there at the sight of a poor young girl who, although dying, repulsed all the Sisters, saying: "Leave me alone; there is no God. I cannot suffer more in hell than I have upon earth!" The Empress drew near the poor woman, and, bending over her, began to speak so gently and persuasively that the girl stared at her in speechless amazement. Finally, she gasped in wonder: "How is it, you are the Empress, are you not? And you, who are so beautiful, so rich, and so happy, to take an interest in an outcast like me, and seem troubled because I suffer! It must be true then that there is a merciful God, since you have such a kind heart!"

The girl was so touched and softened, that she now allowed the Sisters to minister to her bodily and spiritual needs, and, before she died, she crept, a repentant Magdalen, to the feet of her Saviour, and cast upon Him the intolerable burden of all her sins, trusting wholly in His power to save her.

Although Eugénie always made charity visits as quietly and unostentatiously as possible, it soon became known that she had come to visit the Home, and when she finally came out a crowd was awaiting her. She was almost carried to her carriage by sobbing women, who called blessings down upon her head, kissed her hands and clothes, called her "Sister of Mercy," and cheered until she was out of sight. But when the Empress reached home, she was touched to discover that these poor creatures had snipped her flounces almost to pieces, to secure what seemed to them holy and therefore priceless relics of her visit.

During the summer of 1865, Eugénie paid her usual visit to Biarritz, where Bismarck came to visit the Em-

peror, and tramped with him and Mérimée along the sands. Writing of this visit and of the German visitor, Mérimée says: "He is a big German, very polite and by no means naïf. . . . He brought with him his wife, who has the biggest feet in Germany, and a daughter who walks in her mother's footsteps. Adieu, I am going to nurse myself until the fêtes at Compiègne make me ill again."

This gibe against Madame Bismarck's feet, whose size contrasted oddly with Eugénie's and her court ladies', is said to have had no small share in the Franco-Prussian war. It is even reported that Bismarck, on hearing that the court ladies made fun of the wife whom he tenderly loved, then and there swore dire vengeance, and knew no rest until he had wreaked it to the full.

While staying at Biarritz in 1866, their Majesties suddenly learned that Paris was again threatened by a cholera epidemic, such as had decimated the population in various parts of France in 1849 and in 1856. The news no sooner reached them than they hastened back to the capital, knowing their presence would stimulate measures for relief, and encourage the panic-stricken inhabitants. As Eugénie had a heavy cold, the Emperor slipped out of the palace the next morning, without her knowledge, to visit the cholera hospitals alone. When he returned, Eugénie, who was brave and often proudly declared that she belonged "to the race of the Cid and of Don Quixote," reproached him for not having taken her with him, and announced her intention to visit the hospitals herself on the very next day.

Her usual companion was allowed to accompany her only after promising to remain in the carriage, for Eugénie would not expose any one else to the danger she faced so bravely. She visited three cholera hospitals

that day, speaking to the patients, encouraging the doctors and nurses, and showing herself so womanly and compassionate that all who saw her were ready to bow down and almost worship her. One of the victims to whom she ministered with her own hand, murmured faintly: "Thank you, Sister," thinking it was one of the nurses. But when a nun bent down to enlighten him, Eugénie prevented her, saying: "Never mind, Sister, he could not have given me a prettier name."

Her friend Mérimée, writing of these visits, said: "I am not sure that this is very prudent, but it is praiseworthy. With reference to hindering her action in such emergencies, you know as well as I do, that it is impossible. If we presume to talk to her of danger, she will only expose herself to it all the more."

He was right, for Eugénie not only braved an epidemic which made cowards of the most daring, but risked — what many a vain woman would have prized even more than her life — her matchless beauty, by inspecting also the small-pox wards, where many patients were then suffering. Here, too, she entered alone, and when one of the generals commented later upon her courage, she simply answered: "Oh, sir, we are neither of us afraid to stand fire!"

But while her charity and fearlessness roused fervent admiration at times, the people resented her interference in state matters, for she was a foreigner, and it seemed to them that such affairs were any way far beyond a woman's comprehension. Besides, they found great fault with what they deemed her narrow views and Spanish bigotry. They, therefore, eagerly welcomed the remark of a wit and punster, who once declared "Le parti d'Eugénie n'est pas le parti du Génie" (Eugénie's party is not that of genius). A few of her friends, notic-



THE EMPEROR, EMPRESS AND PRINCE IMPERIAL.



ing this tendency among the people, tried to persuade her not to meddle with politics any more; but, failing in their efforts, one of them despairingly cried: "If she would only take warning by the example of Marie Antoinette! It is exactly the same story over again. But she will take no hint. My wife tried, but was made to feel that she must not attempt anything of the kind again."

This critic was both right and wrong; Eugénie would have probably been spared some of her sorrows had she remained aloof from politics; but she was acting according to the dictates of her conscience, which would not permit her to remain passive. Besides, her husband wished her to take part in government affairs, for his health was already very poor, and he foresaw the time when Eugénie might have to stand alone at the helm, until her son could safely take it out of her hands.

The French were particularly sore just then, because Germany had lately won great laurels in the battle of Sadowa, while the Mexican war, the last military enterprise in which they had taken part, had proved a distinct failure. Indeed, the Emperor had been forced to recall his troops and abandon poor Maximilian.

The latter's wife, Carlotta, presented herself at St. Cloud one hot August day, and spent hours trying to wring more assistance from Napoleon. One of her attendants having informed a court lady that her mistress always drank orange water at that hour of the day, some was carried into the room where Carlotta was pleading with Napoleon and Eugénie. The Empress, although annoyed at this trivial interruption, courteously offered the refreshing draught to her guest, partaking of a little of it herself.

Carlotta, finding she could not secure Napoleon's promise to lend her unhappy husband further aid, de-



parted from St. Cloud in anger, exclaiming bitterly: "The grand-daughter of Louis Philippe ought never to have trusted her fate to a Bonaparte!"

Her excitement, the heat, and the bitter disappointment combined to make her very ill, and when she went mad a few days later, some of Eugénie's enemies declared that the Empress had poisoned her guest with an innocent glass of orange water. Poor Carlotta became hopelessly mad; and she fortunately never recovered her senses sufficiently to realise that her gallant and adored husband had been executed in Mexico.

That summer, the French court sojourned as usual at Fontainebleau and at Biarritz, where Mérimée acted as escort to the Empress when she went with the Prince Imperial to visit a famous smuggler's cave near the coast. The autumn season at Compiègne was even more brilliant and interesting than usual, for the Imperial guests often included such famous writers as Alexander Dumas, Émile Augier, Ernest Legouvé, Octave Feuillet, Edmond About, Gustave Flaubert, such artists as Meissonier and Doré, the musicians Auber, Berlioz, Gounod, and Thomas, and the scientist, Pasteur, who discovered the proper treatment for rabies.

Napoleon III., having decided to have another Exposition in Paris in 1867, immense preparations were made to have it open promptly on the second of April. Again, as in 1856, visitors came in throngs from all parts of Europe and America, and Paris was for a time the "inn of the world." Besides the exiled sovereigns who had taken up their abode in the French capital, many crowned heads now came to visit the Exposition, and they were all sumptuously entertained by Napoleon and Eugénie. Court gaieties succeeded each other with almost bewildering rapidity; but people said that the

Imperial court was then as corrupt as it was brilliant. The fact is that all the European courts at that time, save the English and Prussian, enjoyed the same unenviable reputation; but while the morals of Napoleon and of his friends cannot bear scrutiny, Eugénie herself can be accused of nothing worse than imprudence and blindness concerning the standing of some of the people with whom she associated.

Among the titled guests entertained by the Imperial couple for the Exposition were two of Queen Victoria's sons, King Oscar of Sweden, the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia, the Sultan, the Czar, etc., etc. It was during the visit of the Russian Emperor that their Majesties attended the races at Longchamps, where Eugénie attracted more attention by her dazzling beauty and the charming manner in which she acknowledged the people's homage, than the two Emperors seated side by side in the same carriage. Still, they were to furnish their sensation too, for a Pole suddenly sprang forward attempting to kill the Czar, who was saved by the presence of mind and devotion of one of the attendants. Both he and Napoleon showed great calmness and courage, and were so little affected by this occurrence that they attended the ball at the Russian Embassy that same evening.

The King of Sweden, who was also made much of by his Imperial hosts, was present at the distribution of medals at the Exposition, in the middle of the summer. At this ceremony, the Emperor was surprised to see his son suddenly step forward, and present him with a prize for the redemption of waste lands, — a reward he well deserved, — but scarcely expected to receive. The ten-year old Prince acquitted himself well of his part in this affair, and when his little speech was over, he was

warmly applauded, while the people cheered loudly for the recipient of the medal. But that day was not to be one of unalloyed pleasure for Napoleon, for the tidings of Maximilian's death came just then to fill his heart with sorrow.

Napoleon and Eugénie were both very superstitious, but the former was fatalistic as well, and already too inclined to believe a prophecy made in 1841, predicting the rise of a Second Empire, its downfall occurring simultaneously with an attack from the Germans, and the destruction of Paris by fire and bloodshed. Spaniards are, as a rule, all more or less superstitious, so it is no wonder that Eugénie, however strong-minded in other respects, should have believed in omens. In her anxiety to learn something of future events, and stimulated by a thirst for novelty, we are told she eagerly investigated occult and psychic as well as scientific questions, and took a lively interest in all forms of mesmerism, spiritualism, and clairvoyance. At one time the whole court was amused by séances, spirit-rappings, and table-movings, which brought a little variety in the usually monotonous round of court entertainments. But a charlatan having sought to take advantage of his position to discover state secrets, and direct the course of events by subtle hints and peculiar prophecies, the Emperor put an abrupt end to all such performances.

Many people erroneously fancied that court life was always as gay as it seemed on state occasions; and much was said about the revels in which the inhabitants of the Tuileries were supposed to indulge. The fact is that the private entertainments were far quieter and more decorous than those given in many other houses, and so unpretentious, that whenever there was any dancing, a mechanical piano or a hand organ supplied all the music.

Eugénie, however, tried to make evenings pass pleasantly, not only because she was hospitably anxious to entertain her guests, but because she knew the Emperor required relaxation, and wished to divert his mind as much as possible from his arduous political studies, and beguile the pain which he so often suffered from rheumatism and gravel. Hearing that people cavilled at the so-called court orgies, Eugénie was naturally surprised, and once impatiently exclaimed: "Really, do they find fault with our having a good time at the Tuileries? It is as little as I can do to give some diversion to the poor Emperor, who is worried all day with politics, and to give him an opportunity to see some pretty faces."

In 1868, when the press laws were modified, Henri de Rochefort began to edit a revolutionary paper called "La Lanterne," wherein he attacked the Emperor and Eugénie with the utmost virulence. A clever, sarcastic writer, he penned sensational articles, wherein he ranted and raved against their Majesties, whom he accused of every heinous sin he could imagine. But Napoleon and Eugénie attached so little importance to his calumnies, that they at first paid no attention to them. Indeed, Eugénie is said to have read them mainly to discover what the man would say next, and to have laughed quite heartily at times over their ludicrous exaggeration.

But the slanders she fancied no one could possibly believe, were repeated so often, and reached so many ears, that they gradually won credence, and finally proved an important factor in undermining the faith of the people in the Imperial government. Rochefort became so lawless, at last, that his paper had to be suppressed; but he fled to Belgium and continued his attacks with the same vehemence and skill, until he again returned to France.

Early in May, the Prince Imperial, who had been receiving a preparatory course of instruction in his mother's oratory, was solemnly confirmed in the Chapel of the Tuileries. He was already thoughtful and learned beyond his years, and the usual companion of his father, who delighted in examining mechanical inventions with him, and initiated him into many of his favourite pursuits. In August, the family went as usual to Biarritz, where the Empress and Prince Imperial were for a time in imminent danger. They had gone out yachting with quite a large party, including the Empress' chaplain. The wind freshened suddenly, and rose to the height of a storm before they could return to shore. The captain losing his bearings in the darkness and tempest, the ship ran upon a rock, causing a great panic, and for a few moments it really seemed as if all on board would perish. But the Empress set a good example by remaining very calm through all the confusion, her only anxiety being to shield her son, whom she held tight in her arms. When she quietly told him: "Don't be afraid, Louis," he showed that he had inherited all her courage and spirit by bravely answering: "I am not afraid, mamma, I do not forget that my name is Napoleon."

The Empress' courage and calmness proved so inspiring, and the crew went to work with such good will, that soon all were safely landed. Meantime, the Emperor had been very anxious, and hastened down to the shore just in time to welcome the returning travellers. The pilot bore witness to Eugénie's fortitude by exclaiming: "Sire, we were able to cross only because the Empress was on board. We never would have accomplished it but for her. She brought us good luck!" All the sailors fully agreed with him; but they were less complimentary when it came to the chaplain, for, true to their calling, they

considered a priest on board equivalent to a Jonah, and ascribed the storm and danger solely to his presence among them.

In September the Emperor lost another staunch adherent and unacknowledged relative in Walewski, who was an illegitimate son of Napoleon I. This man possessed great diplomatic skill, and was a safer and more honest adviser than many of his contemporaries at the court of Napoleon III.

In 1869, the centenary of the birth of Napoleon I., the Emperor and Prince Imperial journeyed to Ajaccio in Corsica, where "Napoleon Day" was celebrated with the utmost pomp. Then they proceeded to Algeria, and, after their return, visited the camp at Châlons together. The Prince was daily becoming more of a companion for his father, who, feeling his health failing rapidly, was more and more anxious to keep him as much as possible before the eyes of the people, so that they might learn to love and admire him, and thus be ready to welcome his accession to the throne.

The Prince Imperial liked travelling with his father, and as he was a born soldier, nothing delighted him so much as a visit to the camp. There he viewed all the manœuvres with profound interest, and rode beside the Emperor when the latter reviewed the troops. A spectator reports that he "held himself so well and was so cool and dignified, that he looked like his father become a boy again."

Although the Empress had not gone to Corsica or Algeria, she, too, was planning an extended trip; for it had been decided that she should inaugurate the Suez Canal, which had been built by her mother's first cousin, Ferdinand de Lesseps. This world-renowned engineer had secured his first franchise in 1854, and now, after

fourteen years of hard work, was on the eve of demonstrating the success or failure of his undertaking. He had met with great opposition, especially among the English; for Lord Palmerston, then Prime Minister, declared openly that, "All the engineers of Europe might say what they pleased, he knew more than they did, and their opinion would never make him change his one jot!"

The Emperor Napoleon, on the other hand, having planned during his imprisonment a ship canal through Central America, was strongly in favour of this scheme, to which he lent all his personal support; for it had been decided that the canal should be a commercial and not a political affair. In spite of discouragements which would have daunted any one else, De Lesseps persevered, loyally supported by the Empress, who, as her husband was just then too ill to bear a long journey, promised to open the canal for her kinsman.

The Empress took advantage of this journey to visit Venice, Athens, and Constantinople in the Imperial yacht, and sailed up the Nile, whence she wrote to her husband: —

My very dear Louis: — I am writing to you on my way up the Nile. If I were to tell you we are cool, it would not be absolutely true, still the heat is quite endurable, for there is a good breeze blowing, but out in the sunshine, it is very different! I keep you informed by telegraph of the state of the atmosphere. I hear from you and Louis every day by telegraph; it is wonderful, and very nice for me to feel bound to the shore by this wire which connects me with those I love.

I am full of enthusiasm over our charming journey, which I would like to describe to you, but so many other, more learned and graphic writers than I, have undertaken this task, that it seems to me as if I must be satisfied with admiring in silence.

Eugénie

I was greatly worried to know you were in Paris yesterday and without me, but I learn by a despatch all has gone on satisfactorily. When one sees other nations, one can better judge and realise the ingratitude of our own. I think, in spite of everything, that one ought not to be dismayed, but go on treading the path you have laid out.

Everybody says and thinks that it is a fine thing to have faith in the concessions which have been granted. I trust, therefore, that your speech will lay stress upon this point, and the greater the need of force later on, the more clearly it will demonstrate to the country that we have real beliefs and are not driven to expedients. I am very far away, and too ill-informed concerning events since my departure to speak thus, but I feel sure that our real strength lies in persevering in our beliefs, and I do not like sudden changes. I am convinced that in the same reign one cannot successfully make two Coups d'État. I am talking at random, however, for I am preaching to one who knows all this far better than I. But some things must be said, if only to prove what you know, that my heart is with you both, and if, in days of calmness, my active spirit likes to roam abroad, I love to be close beside you both in times of trial and anxiety. Far from noise and strife, one inhales a healing peace, and by an effort of imagination I persuade myself that all is well since I know nothing to the contrary. Do seek some amusement, one cannot live without it, and I believe one should build up one's weary mind like one's enfeebled body, and that even the best organised brain can be worn out by a single persistent train of thought. I have learned all this by experience, and I will no longer dwell upon the things which have dimmed the bright colours of my illusions. My own life is over, but I live again in my son, and I believe that the joys which reach my heart through his will prove real. Meantime, I am enjoying my journey, the sunsets, and this strange scenery with its strips of cultivated land about fifty metres wide along either shore, and beyond that the desert with its sand hills all aglow in the blazing sun. Farewell, and believe in the love of your devoted

(Signed) EUGÉNIE.



Eugénie's enemies see in this letter an irrefragable proof that "hers was the brain which planned the schemes which her husband carried out," but others, less prejudiced, only see a wife and mother who took a keen interest in all that concerned her beloved ones at home.

After visiting Cairo, where she viewed the Egyptian dancers, and made a nocturnal expedition to see the Pyramids illuminated by calcium lights, Eugénie went to Alexandria, and, embarking on the "Aigle," sailed to Port Said, where a fleet of about one hundred and fifty vessels hung out all its bunting and manned all its yards in her honour. Eugénie's vessel was to head the procession, which included vessels from almost every country, on board of which were the Emperor of Austria, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and many other royal personages who had come thither to witness the opening of the Great Canal.

Ferdinand de Lesseps was on the Empress' yacht; but although he appeared calm and confident, he was trembling lest his plans should fail, and his credit thereby suffer dire shipwreck. Almost at the last minute two serious contretemps arose: first, a huge rock was suddenly discovered buried in the soft sand in the only section of the canal which had yet to be dug out. This, however, was happily disposed of by means of heavy charges of powder forwarded from Cairo. The more serious mishap, however, was that an Egyptian frigate, having gone part way along the canal, in trying to turn around, buried its stem and stern on either bank, and stuck fast, thus entirely blocking the passage. Giving hasty orders to dig her out, tear her loose, or blow her up if need be, De Lesseps hurried off to his post at the Empress' side, where he eagerly awaited a signal announcing that the passage was free. The French yacht

was the first to enter the canal, followed by many other vessels, none of which drew more than thirteen feet of water, for the canal was not yet finished, and its depth much less than at the present day. Five minutes before reaching the bend whence the unlucky frigate would be seen, De Lesseps, to his infinite relief, received the signal that the passage was clear. When the Imperial yacht reached the ominous point, the frigate was safely moored to one side of the canal, with flags streaming from its yards and every mast-head, and De Lesseps could record, with a chuckle of amusement, that "every one was charmed with the attention which had placed a large frigate on the passage of the fleet of inauguration!"

At Port Said, the Empress and other august guests landed, and went to a pavilion, where Eugénie took the seat of honour under a dais, and, surrounded by all the royal guests, witnessed the ceremonies by which the Mohammedan, Greek-Catholic, Coptic, and Roman Catholic Clergy proceeded to bless the new canal. The Empress then graciously received some flowers tendered by a group of young girls, before returning to her yacht, amid the deafening cheers of the natives and of six thousand strangers assembled to view the pageant. That evening an illumination and fireworks formed part of the entertainment, and the next day her vessel led the way along the canal to Ismailia, which it reached only at sunset. Eugénie was overjoyed to know that her kinsman's canal was a complete success, but speaking of this journey she afterwards confessed, "That during the whole journey, she had felt as though a circle of fire were round her head, because every moment she fancied that the 'Aigle' stopped short, saw the honour of the French flag compromised, and the fruit of all our labours lost." De Lesseps adds that at the state dinner she was

obliged to leave the table, for her emotions overcame her. "We overheard her sobs, — sobs which do her honour, for it was French patriotism overflowing from her heart!"

The Empress lodged at Monsieur De Lesseps's house, but visited the Khedive's palace on the next day, and enjoyed an exhibition of Bedouin fine horsemanship. She also attended a grand ball where several thousand people could admire her without restraint in all the splendour of state attire.

On the 19th of November, 1869, Eugénie sailed back along the canal, which now permanently connected the Red and Mediterranean Seas, greatly shortening the distance between Europe and India, and thereby conferring an inestimable benefit especially upon the English, who had so opposed and dreaded this very undertaking. An Englishman who was present at the canal opening, speaking of Eugénie, says: "It was impossible to overrate the gracious influence of the Empress' presence. The occasion, great as it was, would have lost its romance if she had not been there. She it was who roused the spirit of chivalry, checked the spirit of strife, enmity, and intrigue among rival men, and spread the gauzy hues of poetry over commerce, science, and avarice."

Meantime, the Emperor took advantage of his wife's absence to submit to an operation which allayed the pain he suffered with such fortitude, although it could not eradicate the disease from which he died. He had always been a liberal in politics and ready to place as much power as possible in the hands of the people. The time now seemed to him propitious to carry out his pet plan to establish in France a constitutional empire. Knowing his health was very precarious, and that in

case of his demise the power would rest for several years in the hands of a woman and of a boy, he determined to relieve them of as much responsibility as possible by making the long projected change in the government.

At the next elections, therefore, the people voted on this question, and France became a constitutional Empire by virtue of eight million votes, which showed how eagerly the change was welcomed. It was thus that, early in 1870, Napoleon placed in the people's hands much of the power which he had wielded so long, so he cannot be held wholly responsible for many of the catastrophes which ensued, although they have all been laid at his door.

Eugénie was warmly welcomed on her return, and had much to relate of all she had seen and heard during her travels. It is said that traces of her recent expedition were even perceptible in her attire, her favourite tint being now a pale green which became very fashionable and was poetically dubbed "Nile green" or "Eau de Nil." Besides, the "burnoose" or Arab mantle, with its stripes of many hues, now became the favourite summer and evening wrap. But although Eugénie's detractors vowed that fashions occupied far too great a share of her time and attention, she diligently fostered and encouraged charitable institutions, which she frequently visited. Indeed, thanks to her patronage, they increased more rapidly during the Empire than at any other time, for between the years 1852–1869 three thousand nine hundred and forty-two new institutions, and one thousand nine hundred and four new infant schools were opened in the city of Paris.

The Empress, besides inspecting all these places from time to time, diligently collected and sorted her husband's papers, which were carefully put aside as valuable histor-

ical data. Indeed, Eugénie was so jealous of her husband's renown, that she wished all these documents preserved for posterity, and often laughingly remarked when she had saved some paper from destruction: "I run like a mouse after the Emperor's bread-crumbs."

Not being a liberal in politics, however, she did not approve of the change Napoleon had recently made. Besides, she still wished to help the Pope maintain his temporal power, and thought the Emperor was placing too much authority in the hands of the people. Some writers further add that she was very anxious to have her husband abdicate in his son's favour, so she could wield the Imperial power as Regent. The latter statement seems, however, most unjustifiable; for while Eugénie did regret to see her husband ready to entrust his power to others, and apparently so lacking in energy, she ascribed his languid indifference to a passing illness only, for she did not suspect how seriously ill he was already.

Prussia had been enlarging itself on all sides, and, owing to successful wars with Austria and Denmark, had risen in a very few years to the rank of an important power. German statesmen had foreseen and prepared for a conflict with France, which they were determined to bring about in good time, knowing it would result in German unity. A dispute concerning the candidacy of a Hohenzollern Prince for the Spanish throne, proved a spark of fire in the long waiting powder barrel. The Emperor, remembering the scenes he had witnessed on the Italian battle-fields, and too ill to wish for aught but peace, used all his authority to avoid a conflict. But his new cabinet, headed by Ollivier, and especially the Catholic and so called war-party, were in favour of war. The Empress was too spirited a woman to bear any

insult tamely, and when informed that the King of Prussia had treated Benedetti, the French emissary, cavalierly, she waxed very wroth indeed. At the council, Marshal Lebœuf exclaimed with great violence that he would resign immediately if war were not declared instantly, and Eugénie, ill advised, warmly supported his views, saying that "war was an unavoidable necessity, if the honour of France was not to become an empty word."

In spite of all the pressure brought to bear upon him at a time when he was too ill to endure any strain, Napoleon resisted as long as he could; but, vanquished at last by Eugénie's arguments, he finally consented to do as the war faction wished. It had been impressed so forcibly upon the Empress that the Emperor was ruined unless war was declared, that she rejoiced openly at this decision, and, full of courage and hope, innocently boasted that this was her war. This unfortunate remark, repeated far and wide, attracted much more attention than necessary to the fact that Eugénie was in favour of war, and when it turned out unsuccessfully, made many people lay all the odium of it upon her.

The Emperor, misled by Marshal Lebœuf's assurance that all was more than ready (*archi prêt*) and that the army was in such fine condition that not a gaiter button would be missing when called into the field, declared war on the flimsiest of pretexts. All the nation immediately vociferated, "On to Berlin!" for no one doubted the success of the war in which the Emperor was to act as General-in-Chief, while Eugénie again became Regent. And yet, although murmurs had been heard from time to time, the people still had confidence in the Empress, and Rouher merely expressed the popular belief when he said in his address: "Your Majesty is drawing the sword,

and the whole nation is quivering with pride and eagerness to accompany you. Our august Empress is again to preserve the Imperial power, and our great Legislative Assembly will protect her with respectful devotion. The people well know her generous heart, and have perfect confidence in her wisdom and energy."

Preparations were now made with feverish haste, and Eugénie, who was very anxious that her son should be manly and brave, decided that he should accompany his father, although he was then only thirteen years of age. This news was announced to Countess de Montijo in the following despatch: —

Louis will set out for the army in a few days with his father. I want you to send him your blessing before he leaves. Don't worry. I am perfectly calm. He must do his duty and uphold his name. I write to you by this mail.

(Signed) EUGÉNIE.

The grandmother immediately telegraphed her blessing, which the Prince acknowledged thus: —

Thank you, dear grandmamma, for your dispatch. I hope it will bring me luck. I am writing to you to-day.

(Signed) LOUIS NAPOLEON.

He and his father left St. Cloud at the end of July, bidding farewell to Eugénie, and boarding the train at the Park station, instead of driving through the capital, where the Emperor feared he would not receive the same ovation as when he set out for Italy in 1859.

Soon after reaching the army headquarters, the Emperor and his son witnessed a small engagement at Saarbrück, and, when it was over, the fond father telegraphed to Eugenie: —

Louis has stood fire for the first time [literally, has received his baptism of fire]. He was admirably calm, and never lost his



THE PRINCE IMPERIAL AS A CADET.



self-possession. One of General Froissard's divisions carried the heights which command the east side of Saarbrück. The Prussians made a short resistance. We were in the foremost rank and bullets fell at our feet. Louis has kept one ball that fell close by him. Some of the soldiers wept when they saw him so composed. We lost only one officer and ten men.

(Signed) NAPOLEON.

This telegram, so natural on the part of a doting parent when addressed to the mother of an only son, was, however, soon made public. Foreign newspapers, using the literal translation, went into shrieks of merriment over this ridiculous phrase of their own concoction, making all manner of fun of both father and child, and, strange to relate, this mistake still causes occasional comment.

The Emperor had always maintained, that with the French everything depended on the first move. If that proved successful, the soldiers could be depended upon to fight admirably, while a check at the outset was sure to rob them of confidence in their generals and hence of all courage. The little engagement of Saarbrück was speedily followed by the battles of Weissembourg and of Woerth which, being both crushing defeats, may be said to have decided the issue of the war. Indeed, Napoleon himself telegraphed to Eugénie after Woerth: "All is lost. Try to hold your own in Paris."

These defeats opened the nation's eyes in a very rough way, and when the people discovered that their army was not going "on to Berlin," but that the Germans were coming to Paris, they were in despair. They now blamed the Emperor for hurrying them into an unnecessary war, when no preparations had been made, and discovered with dismay that their boasted army was ill-trained, ill-fed, and ill-armed, and that the enemy outnumbered them eight to one. The people fairly howled

with rage and disappointment, while the newspapers shrieked the most bitter denunciations against the government.

Eugénie, at the news of these defeats and of the populace's anger, immediately hastened back to Paris, although the Tuileries were almost uninhabitable in summer, and took up her abode there, determined to be near at hand in case of emergency. The day after her arrival there, she issued the following proclamation : —

FRENCHMEN ! — The beginning of the war has not been favourable to us, and our armies have suffered defeat, but let us be firm in resistance and hasten to retrieve our losses. Let there be but *one* party among us, that of France. Let us have but one standard, that of our honour ! I shall be in your midst, and you will see me faithful to my duty and calling, the first where danger threatens, the foremost to guard the banner of the Empire. I call upon all good citizens to preserve order, any violation of it would be equivalent to conspiring with the enemy.

(Signed) EUGÉNIE.

Of an ardent, impetuous nature, Eugenie burned to *do* something, and even offered to lead the defence ; but her advisers wisely restrained her, knowing the people would be sure to misjudge her, for they now remembered all the scurrilous articles written by Rochefort and others, felt that she was not a born Frenchwoman, knew she had been in favour of this disastrous war, and realised that the Empire had cost vast sums of money. The people were not only dissatisfied with the government, but with the management of the war, and clamoured for another general, until the Emperor yielded to their wishes and entrusted the command to Marshal Bazaine. He then offered to return to Paris himself, and perchance, had he done so, and acted energetically, the Empire might

yet have been saved. But Eugénie, believing such a move would jeopardise not only his power but his life, sent Napoleon the apparently cruel, but pertinent message: "Come back victorious, or do not come at all. All or nothing." She would not allow her son to return to the capital either; for heads were so heated that she feared lest he too might not be safe there.

Still Eugénie deserved all the support the people could have given her, for she was now nobly straining every nerve to atone for the past and undo the harm she had unwittingly done. Even those who accuse her of vanity, extravagance, and bigotry, in time of prosperity, must concede that when adversity came she showed herself a brave, unselfish, and thoroughly noble woman. She not only worked early and late to establish ambulances for the wounded in the Tuileries galleries, which were turned into hospital wards, where she, too, nursed the sick, but whenever she sat down for a moment, picked lint as fast as her fingers could move.

Racked with anxiety for her husband and son, as well as for the unhappy people, she could neither eat nor sleep, and, haunted by the sight of suffering, spent days which seemed like nightmares and long sleepless nights, obtaining a few moments' rest and oblivion only when she resorted to strong narcotics. During the two months which elapsed between the first engagement, and her escape from the palace, it is said that she lived principally upon strong coffee and chloral, which braced her for the time being, but which left her weak and giddy and spent. But poor Eugénie had no time to think of herself; all her energies were bent upon sending troops northward to repel the invader, and when her counsellors urged that if she sent twenty thousand National Guards she would have no men left to hold the turbulent populace

in check, and would thus imperil the throne, she passionately cried: —

"Do not think of me, nor of the dynasty, but think of the army and of France. I will not even allow the question to be discussed. Just realise what a weight of remorse would rest upon us for all time, if it were ever in our power to say that these twenty thousand men might have changed defeat into victory, while we, under plea of protecting ourselves, kept them here in Paris. Lose not a moment; let General Vinoy leave this very day!"

When France so rashly entered upon this war, she had no allies at all; so Eugénie now implored England and Austria to intervene. Both held aloof, however, England mainly because Victoria's eldest daughter had married the Crown Prince of Prussia, and Austria because the country had not yet recovered from the effects of its recent war and the defeat of Sadowa. Still, Eugénie left no stone unturned, and when she found her appeals disregarded, and perceived that the foe might press on to the very gates of Paris, she packed up the most important papers, the chief treasures of the Louvre, and all the crown jewels, and sent them on board a man-of-war where she knew they would be safe. Her own jewels were forwarded to her mother in Spain, so as to be disposed of there should an emergency arise. Under the influence of intense anxiety, and the double strain of painful excitement and over-exertion, Eugénie aged visibly in the course of these two months; but although her strength sometimes flagged, her courage and energy never failed, and, sustained by indomitable will power, she bore all her trials with a fortitude which none of those around her could help admiring.

On the 3rd of September, 1870, the manager of the

Telegraph Office came to the Tuileries, and, meeting the Minister of State, said in low and awestruck tones: "I usually attend to the telegrams exchanged between their Majesties myself, but I have not the heart to deliver this one." The paper which he thrust into the minister's hand was Napoleon's telegram after the army had surrendered at Sedan, wherein he briefly said:

> The army is defeated and taken. I am a prisoner.
> (Signed) NAPOLEON.

These frightful tidings almost stunned Eugénie, but she soon remembered that her husband was still alive, her son free, and that it was her duty to defend France and maintain the Imperial authority, which — although she was not aware of the fact — had already slipped out of her hands for ever. Others, however, were better informed than she, for when she passed the Emperor's study, she caught a glimpse of his secretary busily destroying private papers.

The news of the disaster of Sedan, and of the capture of the Emperor and of eighty thousand soldiers, was announced at an informal midnight meeting of the Legislative Assembly, which immediately deposed Napoleon, appointed a provisional government, and confirmed General Trochu's authority as Governor of Paris. Then it adjourned until noon the next day. Meantime, the Republic had already been proclaimed in Lyons and Marseilles, and when the turbulent element in the capital heard of the Emperor's surrender and of the army's capture, they, too, began to vociferate: "Down with the Emperor! Down with the Empress! Long live the Republic!" and now and then expressed their views by muttering angrily: "An Emperor dies, but does not surrender!"

The night was quiet at the Tuileries in spite of the fact that many of the servants, perceiving the drift of events, and, like rats, deserting a sinking ship, slipped quietly out of the palace, carrying off all they could. When Eugénie rose at six, after a sleepless night, there were no servants to bring her breakfast, and one of her ladies had to wait upon her instead. After hearing Mass in her private oratory as usual, the Empress visited the ambulance wards in the palace, before receiving an early call from General Trochu, who loudly protested his absolute devotion and swore to protect her. It is even said that he and Eugénie then discussed the advisability of her donning a habit and riding with him through the streets to rouse the people, but that this plan could not be carried out because Eugénie's servants had stolen her habits, and there was none left in which she could appear.

Eugénie next presided over the council as usual, little suspecting it would be her last, and although the advisability of removing to Blois or Orleans was discussed, she so little realised the true state of affairs that she had not yet made the slightest preparation for departure. At one o'clock she received a deputation of the Legislative Assembly, which came to propose to her a species of abdication. Standing near the mantelpiece upon which she lightly leaned, Eugénie silently and patiently heard all they had to say and then answered:

"Gentlemen, you say that your proposal leaves an opening for the future, but on condition that now, in the time of greatest peril, I should forsake the post entrusted to me. I cannot do this. I must not consent to what you ask. But, believe me, the trials through which I have passed have been so painful, so terrible, that the thought of retaining this crown for the Emperor and for my son has slight attractions for me. My

only care, my sole ambition, is to fulfil, to their utmost extent, the duties which devolve upon me. If you believe, if the Legislative Assembly believes, that I am an obstacle, that the Emperor's name is an obstacle, and not a power to quell disorder and organise resistance, let them pronounce the Empire over and I shall not complain. I can then leave my post with honour. I shall not have forsaken it. But I feel convinced that the only sensible, patriotic action for the representatives of the country is to rally around me, around my government, to set aside for the present all personal questions, and to unite our efforts to repel the invasion. As for me, I am ready to brave every danger, and to follow the Legislative Assembly wherever it chooses to go to organise resistance. Should this resistance prove impossible, I believe I could still be useful in obtaining less unfavourable conditions of peace.

"Yesterday, the representative of a great power offered the arbitration of the neutral States, on the double understanding of the integrity of territory in France and the maintenance of the Imperial dynasty. I answered that I was ready to accept arbitration on the first head, but I energetically refused the second. The maintenance of the dynasty is a question which concerns the country only, and I will never countenance the interference of foreign powers in home affairs. If you consider that the continuance of the power in my hands prevents all Frenchmen from uniting in defence of the country, do you believe, gentlemen, that it would be too presumptuous, on the part of a woman who voluntarily stepped down from the throne, to ask the Assembly's permission to remain in Paris in any dwelling they chose to assign, so as to have the privilege of sharing the suffering, the peril, and the anxieties of the besieged capital?

"I authorise you to return to the Legislative Assembly and to tell General de Palikao and his colleagues that I have implicit confidence in them, and that I give them full liberty to take such measures in the interest of the country as they judge desirable, which I promise to sanction."

But when the committee had gone, she added, speaking to her friends: "To abdicate would be to weaken our powers of resistance. I wanted nominal authority merely to prevent disorganisation. Let them do what they please, all I ask is to meet this danger. They won't allow me to do so. Ah! in France one should never be unfortunate."

Meantime the mob had collected around the Legislative Assembly, which adjourned to another part of the city, when Gambetta declared: "The Republic shall not be proclaimed here, but in the City Hall!" Part of the mob followed the deputies; but the greater part congregated on the Place de la Concorde, which was soon black with heads. The crowd vociferated the Marseillaise, waved flags, and cast threatening glances at the Tuileries. Finally a mere boy scaled the palace railings, and amid the encouraging shouts of the mob, tore down the Imperial eagle above one of the gates. This seemed to act as a signal for the work of the vandals to begin, for they broke through the slender barrier and poured like a flood into the garden, where flowers and shrubs were reduced to shapeless pulp beneath their trampling feet. As they advanced, hoarse cries of "On to the palace! Abdication! Down with the Spaniard! Down with Madame Badinguet!" were heard on all sides. The latter name was bestowed upon Eugénie in derision, because, when escaping from the fortress of Ham, Napoleon had donned the garments of a mason of that name.

Eugénie

The cries of the people were of course plainly audible in the palace, where many people had assembled since morning, and where Eugénie's friends were urging her to escape while it was yet time. But the Empress was loath to resign the post of duty, and, instead of fleeing the country, wished to remain in it, declaring pathetically: "One can never be unhappy in France!"

The threatening cries made her realise, however, that something must be done, and turning to General Mellinet, she abruptly inquired: "General, can you defend the palace without resorting to arms?" When he sadly answered: "Madame, I do not think so," she despairingly cried: "Then all is over! Not a drop of blood shall be shed for me or mine. We must not add the horrors of civil war to our present disasters." Even then she could not make up her mind to go, although she implored all those who came to offer her assistance to leave as quickly as possible, and not to expose their precious lives. As it was impossible to bid them individual farewells, she appeared for a moment in their midst, and after a very few words took a final leave of them, by one of the slow sweeping curtseys which always won the admiration of all beholders.

Eugénie having vanished, the sorrowing courtiers dispersed, while she hesitated and eagerly questioned the few persons collected in the inner apartment. She was still deliberating whether to go or not, when the Prefect of the Palace announced that the mob were forcing their way into the palace, and that, if she did not depart immediately, it would be too late. But it was only when assured that her presence endangered the building and its inmates that Eugénie, turning to her friends, asked for the last time: "Is this your last word? Can I not be of use in organising the defence? Tell me, have I done my duty to the very end?"



When they tearfully assured her that she had done all a woman could, and that she must now leave to prevent a crime, Eugénie hastily donned the dark hat and cloak which one of her ladies brought her. Her friends pleaded for permission to accompany her; but she would not allow any of them to do so, knowing it would be at the risk of their lives. She accepted the escort of Prince Metternich and of the Chevalier de Nigra, the Austrian and Italian ambassadors, because they were well known in Paris, and because, as foreigners and ambassadors, they were sure not to be molested. Her only female companion was her reader, Mademoiselle Lebreton, who insisted upon going with her.

By this time, a part of the mob had already broken into the palace, and their shrieks were heard on the staircase when Eugénie took the Chevalier de Nigra's arm, and passed rapidly through the rooms where she had reigned as mistress for seventeen years. As they swiftly passed the tall windows, she caught glimpses of the seething, menacing crowd, and sadly cried: "What folly to waste their powers of resistance thus, with the enemy at our gates!"

But although she would fain have lingered, and if necessary have died on the spot rather than flee, the ambassadors hurried her on to a gallery communicating with the Louvre Museum. On reaching the door, they were dismayed to find it locked, and while waiting for the key, shuddered with dread, for the mob was already breaking into the rooms they had just left. The key was fortunately produced without great delay, and as soon as the little group had passed safely, the door was again fastened behind them. Striding swiftly through the deserted Museum, Eugénie was heard to exclaim in mournful accents: "Unhappy palace! It is then the

decree of fate that all crowned heads shall leave you in this manner!"

Then she moved on for a time in silence, murmuring only from time to time: "A hollow dream! A hollow dream!"

Thus they rapidly neared the opposite end of the vast building, and as they approached the gate by which they still hoped to escape, Eugénie said to her escort: "I am holding your arm. Do you feel any tremor?"

"No, Madame, you do not tremble," answered the Italian ambassador, and as he spoke he marvelled at the courage she showed; for her husband was a prisoner, she did not know what had become of her idolised son, she had just been driven from the proudest throne in Europe, and was liable at any moment to meet the fate of her predecessor, Marie Antoinette, at the hands of an infuriated mob. Verily, it was enough to make even the bravest quail!

When the little party reached the St. Germain l'Auxerrois gate, they found a crowd there too; but, as it seemed even more dangerous to linger than to advance, they ventured out boldly. Prince Metternich had ordered a carriage, but it was not at the spot he had indicated, and while he dashed off in quest of it, Monsieur de Nigra remained with the two ladies. They were both closely veiled, and he hoped they might yet escape recognition, when a ragamuffin suddenly caught a glimpse of Eugénie's wonderful hair, and, pointing excitedly, shrilly cried: "Look! there 's the Empress!" Before he could repeat this cry or attract the mob's attention, Nigra, with great presence of mind, gave him a staggering box on the ear, exclaiming: "That 's to teach you to cry Empress, when the Republic has been proclaimed."

Then, thrusting the ladies into the only cab at hand, he shouted an imaginary address to the coachman, who drove off at full speed. Eugénie and her companion were thus adrift in a great city, and it was only after they had driven several blocks that they discovered that three francs was the total amount of their combined fortune! They had left in such haste, that not only had they taken no luggage with them, but the Empress had entirely forgotten to provide herself with money. Fearing an altercation with the driver, should they not be able to meet his demands, the ladies did not dare to drive far, and getting out on Boulevard Haussmann dismissed him quietly. Alone, on foot, and penniless, they knocked at sundry doors; but none of their friends were at home, and they were afraid to make themselves known to strange servants.

At six o'clock, they finally reached the house of Dr. Evans, an American dentist who had often been to the palace to attend the Imperial family. Although his wife was then at the seashore, he was fortunately expecting two patients, who were to stay with him. Hearing that these ladies had come on foot and without any luggage, Dr. Evans told his servants to send them away; but as the strangers insisted upon seeing him, and still refused to give their names, he went to dismiss them himself.

To his utter amazement he recognised Eugénie, who implored his aid. He immediately promised to do all he could to help her, and led her and her companion to the rooms prepared for his guests, where he left them, telling his servants that they were the patients he expected. Then he went out for a few minutes to reconnoitre in the streets, where he soon perceived that Eugénie had not escaped a minute too soon, and that great caution would be required to get her safely out of the city. In

fact the mob was in full possession of the Tuileries, and, not content with slashing the canvases representing their Imperial Majesties, it was already destroying every memento of their presence there. Books and papers were tossed out of the windows and into the gardens, which were soon strewn with valuable documents. But although many people collected these papers as souvenirs, not a single scrap was found incriminating Eugénie in any way, and none could ever be produced as proof of the senseless charges made by her enemies.

Eugénie, exhausted and in tears, shuddered when she heard Dr. Evans's report, and acquiesced when he proposed to take her out of the city early on the morrow. Fearing lest they should be recognised should they attempt to escape by rail, Dr. Evans resolved to resort to stratagem and drove to Neuilly. At the gate he was stopped, but making himself known to one of the officers, he explained that he was on his way to a neighbouring insane asylum, to secure admittance for one of his patients. The officer did not for a moment doubt the truth of this assertion, and Dr. Evans, turning to the sentinel, remarked: "I shall want to pass through this gate very often; look at me well so you will be sure to recognise me and not stop me again."

Thanks to this precaution, he and his assistant, with Eugénie and Mademoiselle Lebreton passed the gate unchallenged on the morrow, and drove right on to Mantes. There, the same comedy was played, for Dr. Evans begged the hotel-keeper to give him a back room with heavily shuttered windows, explaining that he had to be very careful, as he was taking an insane lady to a private asylum, and was meantime responsible for her safety. The landlord accepted this explanation without demur, and when they drove off the next day, Eugénie pre-

tended to resist, repeating several times, for his and the coachman's benefit: "I won't go to the asylum!"

Changing carriages a little further, so as to confuse any pursuers, they drove on, and, after two days' journey, reached Mrs. Evans at Deauville. Those two days' driving were torture for poor Eugénie, for not only were her nerves shattered by all she had been through, and her frame exhausted by sleeplessness and anxiety, but a heavy cold greatly added to her physical discomfort. Almost crazed with grief and suspense, she could no longer control her tears and wept incessantly. By some mischance, the whole party could only muster a couple of handkerchiefs for her use, so Eugénie was not only forced to wash them in her basin at night, and iron them over her knee in the morning; but Dr. Evans had to supplement her efforts and turn laundryman at a pool by the wayside. Still, even in the midst of her own overwhelming sorrows, Eugénie was not unmindful of others, and seeing a poor horse brutally ill-treated, interfered in his behalf so energetically, that she came very near betraying her identity and thus forfeiting her liberty.

Dr. Evans had no sooner placed the Empress in his wife's care, than he set out to find some means of getting her safely across the Channel. During his absence, Mrs. Evans hastily prepared some light luggage for Eugénie, who, when asked what she wanted, could only repeat: "Handkerchiefs, plenty of handkerchiefs! Handkerchiefs above all!"

Meantime Dr. Evans had discovered that a private yacht, the "Gazelle," belonging to Lord Burgoyne, was then in port. He visited the owner, and in a private interview succeeded in enlisting his sympathies in behalf of the fugitive Empress. The English nobleman not

only promised to receive the party on board his yacht, but to land them in England, bargaining however that they should not arrive until midnight, so as to avoid detection.

At twelve, therefore, a gentleman and two ladies quietly boarded the "Gazelle," and one of the latter, stepping up to Lord Burgoyne, addressed him in his own language, saying: "I believe you are the English gentleman who will take me to England. I am the Empress." At this title, which offered such a contrast to her position, she could not restrain her tears, and Lord Burgoyne led her weeping to his wife, who did all she could for the comfort of her unhappy guest.

Such a storm had arisen that evening that Lord Burgoyne felt it was unsafe to venture out to sea; but as, on the other hand, he dared not remain in port lest Eugénie should be in danger, he took his crew into his confidence and asked their advice. The sailors, one and all, voted for an immediate departure, declaring themselves ready and willing to risk their lives for his distinguished passenger. So the boat put out to sea, where it encountered a storm of such violence that an iron-clad sank that very night. The "Gazelle" was tossed about like a cork, and in such imminent peril that Lord Burgoyne once lost courage, and bitterly reproached Dr. Evans for urging them to face a storm in which it was inevitable they should all perish.

Even in the midst of the greatest danger, Eugénie showed no signs of fear; but the pitching and tossing wearied her so greatly that she was doubly glad when they were finally set ashore at Ryde Beach early the next morning. While Dr. Evans was knocking in vain at various hotels, seeking admission, Lord Burgoyne telegraphed to Lord Grandville that he had just landed



the Empress on the English coast. This telegram amazed the minister, who immediately bade the fugitive Empress welcome, but intimated his disbelief of the news by wiring to Lord Burgoyne: "Don't you think you may have been imposed upon?"

The Empress, according to different authorities, learned either on the yacht, or as she landed, that her son had reached England in safety. In fact, immediately after the Sedan catastrophe, his tutor had hurried him into a train, and, without his knowledge or consent, had carried him off to Belgium, with his attendants and about fifty of the Imperial Guards. From thence he sent the characteristic telegram: "We are going straight on to Belgium." (Signed) Filon. ["Filons sur la Belgique." (Signed) Filon.]

But this despatch reached the Tuileries only after Eugénie had gone, and her anxiety was thus greatly prolonged. Learning that her son had arrived at Hastings, she now proceeded thither, where friends soon rallied around her. It was while there that she tearfully read a description of the invasion of the Tuileries, and repeatedly exclaimed: "Poor Trochu! Poor Trochu!"

When asked why she was thus commiserating the recreant Governor of Paris, she innocently answered: "Why, he has often told me, 'Madame, no assailant shall ever enter the Tuileries save over my dead body.' He must therefore be dead. Poor Trochu!" In fact, it never once occurred to Eugénie that any one could prove faithless, or that Trochu, who had pretended such devotion, could desert her to retain his position. But he and many others, nevertheless, felt kindly toward Eugénie, and showed their sympathy by collecting and forwarding her private property.

Meantime, although some French papers claimed that

the Empress had carried off a large fortune, and that she and the Emperor had invested immense sums abroad during the past years, the fact was, as we have seen, that Eugénie left the Tuileries absolutely penniless, and had to sell some of the diamonds she had entrusted to her mother's keeping to defray her own and her son's expenses in England. Although several of the friends who had not been allowed to accompany her when she fled from the Tuileries soon joined her in England, they were nearly as poor as she, and could not therefore do much to help her. But Queen Victoria, who had always been her personal friend, bade her a kindly welcome, and offered her every assistance, and King William of Prussia courteously invited her and her son to share the Emperor's quarters at Wilhelmshöhe. Eugénie gratefully acknowledged all Queen Victoria's friendly offers of assistance; but she declined King William's offer, saying it was impossible she or her son should accept the hospitality of France's bitterest enemy.

As there seemed no immediate prospect of a return to France, and as her means would not permit her living in a hotel with her suite, Eugénie began to look around her for a suitable abode. Strange to relate, already some time before, an eccentric Englishman had improved his estate of Chiselhurst to serve as a home for the Imperial family, saying: "I am convinced that the Emperor Napoleon III., in spite of all appearances to the contrary, will be dethroned some day, or will grow weary of reigning over France. Then he will come to England and live here!"

His peculiar premonition came true, for the Empress leased Chiselhurst for a certain number of years, settling there with her son, whose education was diligently pursued under her immediate supervision. At first, the

Germans showed a desire to treat with the Empress as Regent, but she wisely refused to have anything more to do with politics, referring all emissaries to the new government established in France. Still, she did not despair of returning to Paris, when these troubles were over; for many Bonapartists longed for the restoration of the Empire, and Rouher, the head of the party, was working as actively as he could to negotiate the return of Napoleon IV., in case the people refused to receive Napoleon III.

Eugénie kept informed of all that was going on, and once, at least, in the course of the winter, journeyed incognita to Wilhelmshöhe to see how her husband was bearing his captivity, and to consult him regarding the course she had best pursue. She found him beguiling the time in study, as usual, and much happier — as far as he was personally concerned — dreaming among his books, than when governing a restive people. Although still ill, he suffered less than when he departed for the war, and on the whole found his seven months of captivity at Wilhelmshöhe quite endurable. Still he was very glad when the treaty was finally signed, and he was free to join his wife and son in England. There they talked of the frightful siege of Paris, and of the still more terrible Commune, which had reduced to an unsightly heap of ruins the Tuileries, St. Cloud, and many other public buildings which had once been the ornament and pride of the city.

The new Republic was at first very insecure, and it often seemed as if the government which had risen so suddenly would collapse utterly, thus enabling the Imperial family to return. Rouher fully believed the change must soon come, so he was constantly journeying across the Channel to confer with the Emperor at Chiselhurst.

As the Prince Imperial could not be educated at a military school in France, as he wished, Queen Victoria granted him permission to enter Woolwich in 1872, and even offered to have him admitted without undergoing preliminary examination. But the Prince Imperial refused to enter by favour, and insisted upon sharing the examination and duties of his comrades, with whom he became a great favourite, although he was already graver and more silent than most lads of his own age. In spite of the drawbacks of a change of country, methods, and language, the Prince stood well in his studies, and by dint of hard work and perseverance ranked at graduation among the best students in his class.

Meantime, the Emperor's health had not improved, and his physicians constantly urged a new operation. But he had a horror of surgical treatment, and deferred submitting to it until it seemed as if he might soon be recalled to France. Knowing he would require all his former strength and activity in such a contingency, he yielded at last to the doctors' advice and to Eugénie's pleading, and again submitted to the surgeon's knife. Although the operation was not unusual, or very dangerous, and although it passed off successfully, he never rallied from the shock, but passed away on the 9th of January, 1873. The physicians so little expected this dénouement, however, that it was only a short time before his death that they realised his danger, called the Empress, and telegraphed for the Prince.

Eugénie hurried to her husband's bedside at the very first summons, and as soon as he saw her he smiled and spoke kindly to her. Then the last sacrament was hurriedly administered before he sank into a semi-conscious state. But his mind must have been haunted by the horrors of the recent war, for when his old friend, Dr.

Conneau, once bent over him, he suddenly opened his eyes, and asked, painfully: "Were you at Sedan?"

Those were Napoleon III.'s last words. Soon after he became speechless, but even then he knew Eugénie, and he was making a last mute effort to kiss her when he suddenly passed away. The end came so quickly, that when the Prince reached Chiselhurst it was already too late. The poor boy was met at the door by his weeping mother, who informed him of their mutual loss by clasping him close to her heart with the mournful cry: "I have only you, Louis, left!"

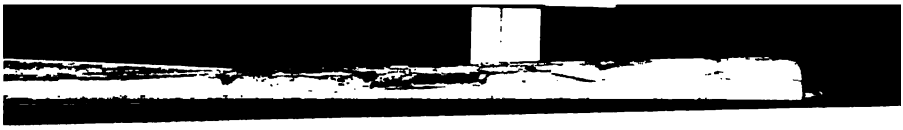
Eugénie was so prostrated by grief that she could not attend her husband's funeral, but ten thousand loyal Frenchmen crossed the Channel to follow him to the grave, and offer condolences to his son, who acted as chief mourner. But when they would fain have greeted the Prince Imperial as Napoleon IV., and raised the familiar cry: "Long live the Emperor!" he gently checked them, saying feelingly: "Your Emperor is dead!"

The Prince Imperial returned to Woolwich to pursue his studies after reading his father's will, wherein he found this significant phrase: "Power is a heavy burden, because one cannot always do the good one wishes, and because one's contemporaries seldom do one justice." Indeed, even yet, the French scarcely do the Emperor justice, for in spite of all the harm he undoubtedly did, he nevertheless did a great deal of good, too, and one of his lasting claims to the gratitude of his country, as well as of the world, is the improvement and embellishment of the capital, which, owing to his efforts, became the finest city on the globe.

Bowed down with grief at the loss of her husband whom she loved devotedly in spite of all his faults and



EUGENIE, 1872.



shortcomings, Eugénie, although mourning for him loyally, concentrated all her affections upon her son. The Prince spent all his holidays with her while at Woolwich, and journeyed with her to Switzerland, where they passed part of the summer months in the castle of Arenenberg, where Napoleon III. had once lived with Queen Hortense.

On the Prince Imperial's eighteenth birthday, six thousand faithful Frenchmen journeyed to Chiselhurst to congratulate him upon attaining his majority, and to hail him once more as Napoleon IV. But the young Prince firmly declared he would never accept such a title, unless it were conferred upon him by a majority of the French nation, and vowed that should he ever be called to rule in France, he would be true to the Bonapartist motto and "Govern for the people and by the people."

Too old to be content at home doing nothing, and too young to wander the world at will, the young Prince, who was of an active, ambitious nature, was restless and discontented. Like most mothers, Eugénie could not realise that her boy was growing up, and she watched over him as closely as if he were still a child, allowing him little freedom and less money. She had practised the most rigid economy ever since the Emperor's death, but merely to further the prospects of this only son, and, fearing to spoil him by too much indulgence, she is said to have treated him with needless severity.

The Bonapartists, meanwhile, made frequent pilgrimages to Chiselhurst, where they never failed to appear with gifts and addresses on "Napoleon Day," as well as on Eugénie's and the Prince's birthdays. They diligently fed the Empress' hopes of seeing this beloved son seated once more on the throne of his father, and,



dreaming of the future, Eugénie apparently forgot that young people live mostly in the present. Neither did she realise that the quiet life beside her could be irksome to her son, who was as visionary and ambitious as his namesake who died at Schönbrunn, and whose life had so many points of resemblance with his own.

Although we are told the Prince Imperial would fain have travelled extensively, Eugénie, either because she could not bear to lose sight of him, or because she deemed it best for his future prospects to remain near France, would not allow him to wander far afield. But what the Prince longed most to do was to enter the army, and his exile seemed most bitter because it deprived him of the privilege of fighting for his country. He was too patriotic, however, to serve under any other flag, and was, therefore, constantly consumed by longings which could not be fulfilled.

Hoping to divert and occupy him, as well as to secure aid and heirs for the future, Eugénie tried to secure a wife for him, and with that purpose in view sounded the oldest dynasties in Europe where there were marriageable princesses. Her efforts failed, but the Prince, coming in contact with Princess Beatrice, the young people were mutually attracted. Now, whereas such an alliance would have filled Eugénie's heart with joy, Queen Victoria refused to sanction it, for she realised that a marriage with a Bonaparte offered small guarantee of a stable and peaceful future, and she wished, above all, to secure her child's happiness.

This disappointment only added to the Prince's restlessness, which culminated in 1879, when his classmates prepared to leave for the Zulu war.

The leaders of the Bonapartist party had frequently declared that some experience in actual warfare would

be of untold advantage to the Prince Imperial in the future, and that, were he only able to win glory, his political prospects would immediately brighten. This knowledge, and the fact that he felt he owed a debt of gratitude to England, which he was generously anxious to repay, made Louis Napoleon apply, without his mother's knowledge, for permission to serve in the English army. Although reluctant to accept the services of "the only son of his mother, and she a widow," Victoria could not refuse this generous offer, provided Eugénie consented to let the Prince go.

Pathetically anxious to further her son's happiness, Eugénie consented, although the thought of exposing him to the dangers of an unhealthful climate and the horrors of savage warfare wrung her maternal heart. Still she showed no weakness, and with the resolution of a Spartan mother bade him go to war. When it became known that the Prince Imperial was going to Africa, many young Frenchmen volunteered to accompany him, and forty of them wished to form a body-guard pledged to watch over his safety. But Eugénie refused this offer, declaring bravely: "No, no one shall accompany my son. He has assumed the garb of a soldier, so he must do as other soldiers do. He must go forth to the field of battle mingling with the rank and file, protected as they are and no more."

Thus Louis Napoleon sailed for Africa; but although his mother wished him to share all his comrades' duties and perils, Queen Victoria sent secret orders not to expose him unnecessarily, for she was still Eugénie's faithful friend, and felt very sorry for the mother whose only child was going so far away. Notwithstanding her orders, the Prince was once allowed to join a topographical excursion, which, by some fatal oversight, started out

without a native escort. The young soldiers set out gaily, for the country seemed quite deserted, and after riding several miles and completing their maps, they dismounted to eat their dinner in an abandoned native hut. Carelessly secure, they neglected even ordinary precautions, and having placed neither sentinels nor outposts, rushed wildly for their horses when a band of natives sprang upon them from an ambush. The blood-curdling cries and uplifted spears of the attacking party, terrified their horses, which reared and plunged so madly that the young cavalrymen had considerable difficulty in mounting them.

In the confusion each thought only of himself, and only one of the number turned his head for a moment to ascertain what became of the rest. He saw the Prince, running beside his horse, — a spirited grey, — which, maddened by the savages' cries, would not allow him to mount. In a last desperate effort to reach his saddle, Louis Napoleon rested all his weight upon a strap, which, being of inferior quality instead of good leather, suddenly gave way and sent him sprawling in the dust, while his steed galloped away after the rest.

Alone and dismounted, pursued by a horde of blood-thirsty savages, the Prince sprang to his feet, and, running like a deer, gained a rocky glen where, placing his back against a boulder he faced his foes, determined to sell his life dearly. There he died, "fighting like a lion," as his slayers subsequently bore witness. When his fleeing comrades finally rallied and rode back in quest of him, they found him dead at the foot of a big rock, his body stripped and covered with wounds, all of which were in front, showing that he had died like a hero. A surgeon, examining the body later, declared that the Prince had been killed instantly, for one of the spears

had entered his eye and pierced his brain. It was thus that Louis Napoleon, the Prince Imperial, or, as he is sometimes called, Napoleon IV., died at Itelezi, on the 1st of June, 1879.

The sad news was, of course, immediately cabled to the English government, whence it was communicated to the aged Duke of Bassano, who had followed his master's fortunes, and always showed the utmost devotion to the Empress Eugénie. He was simply overcome with grief, and when informed that he must break the tidings to the Empress, he despairingly cried: "My lips will never be able to utter such words as those!"

While he and her other friends were consulting how best to prepare her to bear this awful blow, Eugénie, from whom the papers had purposely been withheld, received by mistake a private letter which roused her suspicions. She rose hastily to inquire what it might mean, and as she passed out of the room apprehensively cried: "Some misfortune has happened to my son!" On the threshold she met the Duke of Bassano, nerving himself for the awful ordeal, and, noting his attitude, clutched at her heart and eagerly cried: "You have news from Zululand!"

"Yes, Madame, and it is not good!" gently answered her old and trusty friend. Eugénie started; but brave as ever, and ready for action, she controlled herself as best she could, and said with forced calmness: "Louis is ill! Well, my dear Duke, we will start immediately and go and nurse him."

She was turning to give orders for hasty preparations, when the Duke detained her, saying: "There has been a fight."

"A fight! Then he is wounded?" cried Eugénie, who this time received only a bow in answer, for the



aged courtier could not speak. The mother, unable to harbour the thought that her boy was dead, and still intent upon reaching him as soon as possible, now went on: "We can start to-day. We will surely find at London some vessel to take us to Suez. There, we will see what to do next. There are vessels leaving every day." She called her women, and gave them a few orders; but as the Duke remained immovable beside her, instead of bestirring himself in preparing for the journey, she gazed questioningly at him, until he answered her mute appeal by the trembling statement: "The wound is dangerous."

Eugénie now drew nearer, and, perceiving his tears and grief-stricken face, suddenly understood the full meaning of the news he was trying to impart. With a heart-rending cry, the poor mother fell to the floor in a deep swoon. Throughout that day she sank from one fainting fit into another, until her sorrowing attendants almost hoped she would be spared further suffering, and allowed to follow her beloved son. This was not to be, however; and Eugénie, on coming to her senses once more, bitterly cried: "I shall not even be able to die, and a merciful God will give me a hundred years of life!"

It was days before the unfortunate Empress could shed a single tear, but when the flood-gates of her sorrow opened at last they could not again be closed.

The news of her loss created widespread sorrow, and every one heartily pitied the widowed mother, who had lost all she had. Tokens of sympathy reached her from all parts of the world, although the Bonapartists — who had never even contemplated such a contingency — were fairly stunned with grief. In fact, when the news reached Rouher, the leader of the Imperial party,

it proved such an awful shock that he, too, fainted. But when he recovered from his first emotion, he immediately set out for Chiselhurst, to mingle his tears with Eugénie's, and bear her the condolences of all his party, in whose name he made the following touching address: —

"Madame, we lay our deep, inexpressible sorrow at the feet of your Majesty, for the cruel blow which has fallen upon you strikes France in her dearest memories, as well as in her highest expectations. It has been the will of God that the young Prince should not be spared to your tenderness, to the service of France, and to our sincere devotion, for death has snatched him away at the very moment when we had the right to look for his speedy return to France. We will not compare our grief to yours, boundless as it is; but we only beg your Majesty to accept the testimony of our feelings, which are shared by the whole of France."

Rouher was right; all France did mourn for the Prince, for he had been greatly loved by all the people, who had seen him grow up from babyhood in their midst, and the Bonapartists hoped that popular affection for the child, would in time prove a powerful factor in restoring the man to the Imperial throne. These hopes, however, were blasted forever, and all felt that the Bonapartist cause could hardly rally from such a blow, for the next of kin, according to the laws of Napoleonic succession, was Prince Napoleon, whose character inspired no respect, and who enjoyed little popularity in France.

When Eugénie, who had lightened her widow's mourning a little to please her son, first donned the garb she intended to wear as long as she lived, she showed how conscious she felt that her life was ended, and that nothing but patient endurance on earth and hope of reunion

in heaven now remained to her. The poor woman was indeed very lonely, for all her near relatives were dead, excepting her mother, who was then so ill that she could not even be told of her grandson's death, or help her daughter bear her great affliction.

The Prince's body was, of course, sent home to his mother, who was not allowed to see it on account of the disfiguration caused by his ghastly wounds. When the coffin reached Chiselhurst, the unhappy Empress again fainted, but knelt beside it night and day, praying and weeping, finding a strange comfort in being near the remains of her son.

On the 12th of July, 1879, there was a grand public funeral from Chiselhurst, more than a hundred thousand Frenchmen having come over to escort the Prince Imperial to the grave. The French were not the only people present, however, for other mourners came in shoals from all parts of the country, until it is estimated that no less than one million persons marched in the funeral procession, which Eugénie beheld from her darkened window. Representatives of all the reigning families were present to show their sympathy and respect, and Queen Victoria and Princess Beatrice came in person to mingle their tears with Eugénie's. The funeral services were so impressive, and the thought of the stricken mother so infinitely pathetic, that Christine Nilsson, who had offered to sing, burst into tears instead, and all the spectators broke down and sobbed with her.

Since then, Eugénie's life has been one long period of patient endurance and great suffering. She has been almost a recluse, but when at home almost daily visits the place where her son's and husband's coffins lie side by side in Farnborough Church. There they are to remain until the mausoleum which Eugénie is building is

completed, or until the last will of both father and son can be executed, and their bodies laid in the Invalides beside the founder of their dynasty, on the banks of the Seine, which they, too, loved with undying affection. On the two coffins violets are generally seen, for Eugénie always strews these Napoleonic emblems over the palls. Then, after spending some time alone with her dead, lost in fervent prayer, — her only refuge, — she goes slowly back to her lonely dwelling.

The year after the Prince Imperial's death, the Empress made a pious pilgrimage to Zululand, to visit the place where he had died, and to collect, if possible, details concerning his tragic end. The Duke of Bassano, being too old and ill to accompany her on this journey, his son, who is equally devoted to the Empress, served as her escort, and he bears witness that the stricken mother almost died of anguish on the very spot where her son fell fighting so bravely.

Since then Eugénie has taken no long journeys. But she often goes to Windsor to see Queen Victoria, who is still her faithful friend, her visits there being strictly private, for, in spite of all persuasions, the Empress has never appeared in public since her son's death. Husband and son being both gone, there was no reason why Eugénie should not return to France if she wished; but although she would otherwise gladly do so, she cannot tear herself away from England as long as the remains of those she loved are there.

From time to time, however, she revisits the places where she was once admired by all, and she has been seen and recognised at various times in Paris and at Fontainebleau, standing as a mere tourist in the rooms she once occupied as sovereign lady. When the crown jewels were exhibited, previous to being sold at auction,

she also came incognita to gaze with tear-dimmed eyes upon the glittering stones which were associated with so many brilliant memories.

When the Empress visits Paris, she lodges in her own house near her former palace, for, as she herself stated, soon after her son's death: "I feel myself drawn to the spot where the Tuileries stood, as moths are attracted by the light." As Eugénie is no longer "dangerous," according to political standards, she is allowed to wander at will in the capital, where she muses over the sad changes in her fortune, and recalls memories, which by contrast, make the present seem desolate indeed.

In these mournful pilgrimages, Eugénie has generally been accompanied by Mademoiselle Lebreton, the lady who fled with her from the Tuileries, and who has since then proved her constant and ever-faithful companion. We are told that poor Eugénie has wept so many bitter tears that the eyes, about which every one raved, are now dim and almost sightless. Her beautiful Titian hair is as white as snow, and her once erect and graceful form is bent and bowed by acute attacks of rheumatism. She and her companion have visited sundry bathing resorts in quest of relief for the tortures she endures from this disease, but all in vain, and the fact that she suffers so much, makes her seem far older than her actual years, although she has now passed the allotted three score and ten.

In 1888, the Empress was forced to leave Chiselhurst, with all its happy and painful memories, and seek another abode, for the owner wished to occupy his own house. Eugénie, therefore, removed to a place in Farnborough, where she has since lived in comparative seclusion, although far from forgotten. Devoted friends live

with her there; others visit her frequently and write to her often; and on birthdays and anniversaries loving and sympathetic tokens and messages pour in from all sides, proving that she still has a place in the hearts and memories of those who knew her.

Faithful Bonapartists still make occasional pilgrimages to Eugénie's home, or to the tomb of her beloved dead, where they speak with bated breath of the woman from whom they can no longer expect riches or honours, the woman whom they remember as a queen of beauty, amid scenes of fairy-like splendour, but who has won the world's respect because she nobly bears her "crown of sorrow."

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